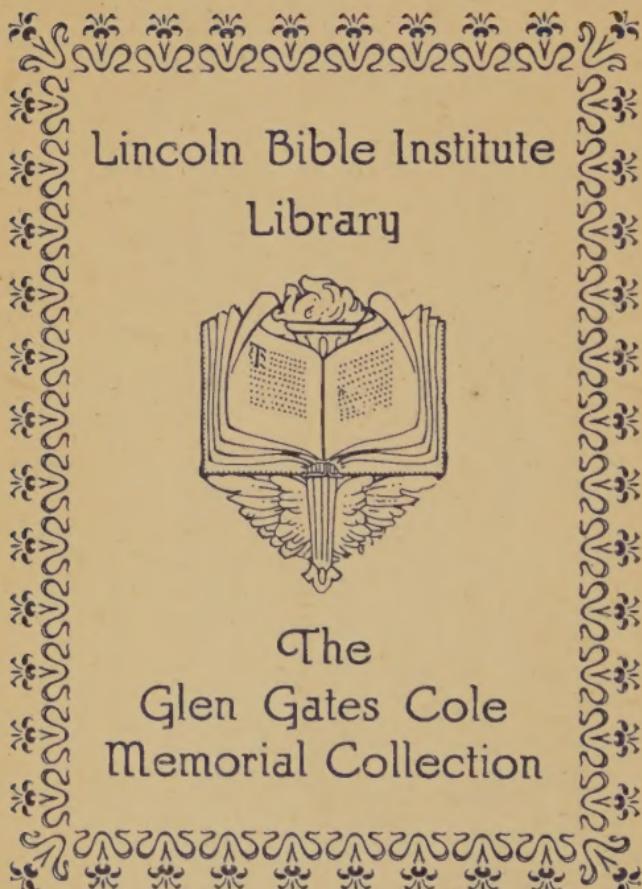


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COMRADES OF THE CARPENTER

A. J. Conrad
11 Cor. 9:8

By A. Z. CONRAD, D.D.

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Comrades of the Carpenter

By

A. Z. CONRAD, Ph. D., D.D.

*Pastor Park Street Congregational Church,
Boston, Mass.*



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*To Comrades of the Carpenter, and especially to
my Fellow Comrades in the Ministry of
The Word, this book is affection-
ately inscribed*

2610.

FOREWORD

REMOTENESS diminishes a sense of reality. God is the sum of all reality. Only proximity can make God real to the thought, and an available, contributive energy. To the little child God is both near and real. To the adult He is likely to be pushed farther and farther away, because of our absorption in material interests. Then He becomes unreal, hazy, nebulous, unmeaning, and by and by He is lost. Then prayer ceases, faith gives place to doubt, and the atheistic drift is strong. Is not a sense of *fellowship* with God a great need of today? We might well sing, "Nearer, my God, to me." How can this become a fact of personal experience save through the Great Comrade, Jesus Christ?

Jesus Christ is the one supreme colossal figure that looms up on the horizon of the thinking world, dwarfing every other personality in contrast. He is the adorable, inescapable, incomparable, transcendent Personality of time and eternity. For three thousand years He has been the controlling, commanding, outstanding and baffling personality, holding the center of the stage amid protest, violent denunciation, ridicule, contempt, persecution and denial. One thousand years, as the One who was to come, and two thousand years as a historic reality.

Nearly two thousand years ago The Carpenter of

Nazareth, credentialed by Almighty God at the Jordan River, stepped out before the world as a Teacher, with supernatural power and with a program for the world's Redemption. He made such claims as would have wrecked Him had they not been true. A weaponless workman, He declared He would found a Kingdom worldwide and endless. He was opposed by wealth, scholarship and both political and ecclesiastical governments. He came to make God the realest fact in the universe. He arrested the attention of the multitudes and broke their hearts by His loving sympathy.

He went voluntarily to Calvary, to the tomb, and then shattered His way out of the rock-hewn sepulcher, vindicating every claim He had made, and killed death itself. After nineteen hundred years He is still the one commanding fact among men.

Today Comradeship with the Carpenter produces the most heroic living, doing and dying, the deepest thinking and the largest love. He is the soul of all philanthropy and the heart of all chivalry. His hands are still outstretched to the belated and the forgotten. He is still saying: "I will take the hindermost." He does it, and places them in the front rank of achieving men and women. He does this by Comradeship. This and this alone will bring man into vital contact with God.

The crime wave today appalls men. Courts and constabulary seem helpless to cope with it. A vision of God as the Great Reality, with which all men will have to reckon, is the only thing that can bring about normal conditions. A new sense of duty and a new vision of judgment to come must arouse and awaken the forces

that can stay back the demonized devotees of lust and the multitude lost in the passion for pleasure. We must get closer to God, by Comradeship with the Son of God. Is it not just possible we who are uncompromising evangelicals have made God distant by our failure to emphasize His human side? Ought we not to stress the humanity of Jesus, so as to make Him seem more really one with us, and thus get closer to God? In "Comrades of the Carpenter" the controlling thought has been *nearness to God*. In the Carpenter we find a bond that is unbreakable. The Nazareth workshop stands for a Divine and human sympathy with the burdens, the toils and the tears of humanity.

We have desired to relate the sayings of the Carpenter to the hopes, fears, purposes and problems of today. If those who may read this message are helped to see, hear and feel the nearness and the availability of God a little more perfectly, it will have accomplished its purpose. "This is Life Eternal, to *know* God and Jesus Christ whom He hath sent."

A. Z. C.

Boston, Mass.

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I

COMRADESHIP WITH THE CARPENTER

THEN SPAKE THE CARPENTER: "Henceforth I call you not servants . . . but I have called you friends" (Comrades).—JOHN 15:15.

ISOLATION is desolation. Seclusion is exclusion. A life is largely measured by its contacts. A life with few contacts is a life with few contracts but many pitiful contractions. Like the waters of a lake, inflow and outflow are essential to sweetness. Aloneness is littleness. A hermit life is only half a life. Fellowship multiplies power. "One shall chase a thousand, and two shall put ten thousand to flight."

If comradeship is important, the character of comrades is vitally significant. Walk with kings, and royalty is yours. Walk with knaves, and rascality will leave its finger-prints. Tell me who your companions are, and I will tell you *what* you are. Soul fusion and interfusion is one of the most important facts of life. Friendship and fellowship change the whole trend of human experience. Delights are doubled, and difficulties are divided, by sweet, sane associations. The chemistry of the soil reveals itself in flower and fruit. The quality of your friendships will color your thought and mark your deed. Misplaced confidences bring defeat, discouragement and despair. Comrades whose

character is exalted, immeasurably enrich life. David was greater because of his fellowship with Jonathan. Paul was the more powerful because of the friendship of Barnabas. Luther was blessed by the sanguine and ardent character of Philip Melanchthon. Calvin's tremendous intellectual energy was the more effective through his associates. Personalities are complementary and supplemental. When the disciples were commissioned and sent forth, they went in couples. When the Seventy undertook an evangelistic campaign each man had his companion. Self-sufficiency invariably proves to be self-inefficiency. What might Burns have become had his Highland Mary lived! Moody was tremendously helped by Sankey. Wilbur Chapman could never have carried on his great campaigns for Christ with the success he did, but for companionship with the enthusiastic, consecrated Alexander.

If all this be true of human comrade-ships, what shall we say of Fellowship with God? How immeasurably increased and enlarged, broadened and deepened is a life which enjoys fellowship with the Infinite! What the French call *comaraderie* is simply fellowship made dynamic.

A distant Deity dismisses no doubts, dissolves no difficulties. Right here we find the secret of the failure of Christianity to measure up to its possibilities. God has been pushed farther and farther away, until He is dismissed altogether, by many. The present-day tendency is to ignore God as a factor in everyday life. How can man fellowship with God? That was God's problem and not man's. He solved it. How? Com-

radeship with the Carpenter. Fellowship with God is not a vagary, it is vital; it is not a dream, it is a determiner of destiny. Right now the greatest need of professedly Christian people is a new sense of the approachableness of God. Remoteness has dimmed our vision of Him. Prayer is effectualized through proximity. If God cannot be made contactual with us, then all thoughts of Him are useless. Only a God with whom we can associate is able to communicate to us either His will or His power.

God is sovereign. Hold that as a precious and immensely valuable article of faith. God is overawing in the majesty of His being. God is commanding in His Goodness and sublime in His Justice. In all of His attributes the Eternal God is overwhelmingly great.

The amazing fact about the omnipotent, omniscient, omnipresent God is Comradeship with man. He is not distant. He is not a far-away disinterested Deity. Heartfulness, hope, happiness, and Heaven are all embraced in the glorious fact that God is available through fellowship. This is what gives life its relish and its zest. Human empowerment is absolutely conditioned upon closeness to God.

This is the order of human history: God—Creation—Man—Communion—Sin—Separation—Degeneration—Covenant—Communication—Redemption—Regeneration. Time passed. Egypt rose, fell, was but a memory. Babylon flamed forth, died, was forgotten. Ephesus, resplendent and then a ruin. Greece, queen of the earth but afterward a vassal nation. Rome, imperial and imperious. Judaism, advancing, declining and ap-

parently dying. Idolatry, selfishness, sordidness, sickness, sorrow, sin. Then came the Carpenter! Through Him, God opened the way to Comradeship with man.

In the Carpenter of Nazareth, God became man's close friend and holy companion. You can imagine the soliloquy of the Trinity: "Man whom we created in our own image has marred the image and broken the bond of fellowship. He does not know Us. He does not love Us. He will never know Us until We unveil Our love for him. He has the marvels of our handiwork before him in nature, but does not find Us. The starry heavens declare Our wisdom but do not proclaim Our affection. Man hears the voice of thunder, the roar of the ocean, but does not find in them the music of Divine love. Let us go to him embodied in form like his own. Let Us walk with him, talk with him, sorrow with him, suffer with him, then die for him.

"Then he will understand. Then he will discover who and what and where God is. If We weep with him, work with him, think with him, feel with him, become a Comrade to him, then he will become a new creature, and the longing of Our Own heart for fellowship will be satisfied."

Then came the Carpenter! A sweet maiden of Nazareth became the vehicle through whom God accomplished His historic entry into the world. The mystic beauty of the Incarnation is entrancing. How natural! How like God! How human! How Divine! With a finesse and a directness dismissing all thought of imposture the sweet story of the birth and growth of Jesus is told in the Gospel narrative. "God manifest

in the flesh!" Preparing for Comradeship with man! Thus and thus only could He make us realize that He knows childhood in all its tenderness; thus and thus only could we appreciate His perfect acquaintance with the struggles, the impulses, the aspirations of youth. How else could God have come into the activities of men when they are at the full noontide of life, so that the business man might know that there are no burdens he has to bear, no reverses he has to meet, with which the Great Companion is not familiar? How gracious and how good this coming of the Sovereign Lord to make possible His own self-impartation to man! When a deep realization of the fact that God is in His world possesses the human heart, everything in life changes. The outlook is different. A sense of limitless ability seems to stir within the soul. Today the emphasis has been placed on self-development, self-dependence, self-exertion, as the whole need of man in his life achievements. Such doctrine will never make for the mightiest character. As well urge the man at the lathe, with steel to be made into accurately fashioned cylinders, to depend on his own muscle and not upon the great dynamo which has been brought within reach of his hand and into which he can gear himself by the shifting of a lever. How stupid he would be not to avail himself of the power of a thousand men and thus become himself a thousand instead of one. That would be sanity applied. Ignoring God is far greater folly than ignoring mechanical aids in our material achievements. Why not avail ourselves of Omnipotence in performing the herculean task of constructing

character? Why not attach ourselves to Omniscience and be wise? Contact with God is fundamentally important. It has become a reality with the Comrades of the Carpenter. It was the Incarnation that eliminated the seeming distance between God and man.

God thus consecrated *Comaraderie* forever. He made true friendship a fountain of joy.

1 One cannot conceive of the workshop of Joseph as cheerless or dreary. Good-will develops good-cheer. Companionship at high levels, gives life radiancy. Disparity of age could not prevent exhilarant fellowship. Of all men, Joseph was the one person blessed by association with Jesus in the exuberance of His youth. The young apprentice had a sympathetic teacher. From childhood He knew the meaning of weariness from work. He was interested, intelligent, energetic. Joseph, as no other save his young wife, held the mystic secret of the Incarnation. During the period of the unfolding of the life of the Divine Child, a bond unbreakable, through comradeship, must have united the lives of Joseph, Mary and Jesus. It was a three-fold cord which is not quickly broken. What conversations must have been theirs! What surprises! How often the elder of the twain stopped the saw, the plane or the hammer, startled by some unexpected expression of other-world-wisdom from the lips of the boy blossoming into manhood. The growing consciousness of His mission would inevitably express itself in extraordinary utterance. Wisdom astounding and inspiring would quicken the heart-beat of Joseph, and confirm his faith in the reality of the supernaturalness of the

source of the life of his foster son and the purity and sweetness of his beloved Mary. How glad he was that he had heeded the counsel of the mysterious messenger who assured him of the absolute honor of her whom, not strangely, he had doubted when unwedded motherhood confronted her. More and more now, he *knew*. To the holy mother, the young Carpenter became more a comrade than a son. How well she knew that the mystery of His birth carried with it a two-world meaning! Her love ripened into reverence.

Daily she would seek the shop of Joseph, that she might be near enough to hear the conversations and enjoy the comradeship which so enriched the lives of Joseph and herself.

The simple requirements of the carpenter's craft of that day were early mastered by the ardent Apprentice. The workshop was for years a school-room as well. Copies of the writings of the patriarchs, prophets and poets of Israel were eagerly sought and became the textbooks thoughtfully studied by Jesus. The hidden meaning of the age-long promises found their fullest exposition from the lips of Him who had come as the fulfillment of the hopes of the centuries.

Years passed. The day came when Joseph laid aside the tools of his trade, bade farewell to the beloved mother and her son, and fell asleep. The comradeship between Jesus and His mother grew strangely sacred and inexpressibly sweet. Here, motherhood and sonship found their highest and holiest expression. From the very moment of the Incarnation, motherhood took on a sacredness it had never before possessed. Nothing

so sanctifies motherhood today as the fact that God chose motherhood as the method of His fullest manifestation of Himself to humanity.

The exalted character of the Carpenter had a twofold influence upon his fellow townsmen. To the baser sort this unexampled purity of life was a constant rebuke, and awakened a secret antagonism. To the lovers of truth and righteousness Jesus was sought for counsel and comradeship. For ten years after He had reached the age of twenty He was *the Carpenter of Nazareth*. This explains why later on, when an unusual expression of wisdom and power amazed the people, they said: "Is not this the Carpenter?" The Nazareth shop was the center of influence. Here came those who coveted fellowship with soul-nobleness and who yearned for a fuller knowledge of things Divine.

Three decades had almost passed since the angels at Bethlehem announced to wondering shepherds: "Unto you is born this day in the City of David a Saviour." Years had now passed since Jesus in the Temple had uttered the significant word: "Wist ye not that I must be about my Father's business?" The hour was striking for the great venture.

For four hundred years no voice of a great prophet had been heard. The silence now was broken. John the Baptist, cousin of Jesus, spoke first. From the desert there came a cry, resonant with righteousness and poignant with purpose, "Repent." The echo of it reached Galilee. How often Jesus had been in communication and communion with His cousin John is not recorded. Some times, without doubt. The Car-

penter heard the voice in the wilderness. It was the signal for redemptive action. He needed no repentance. He could say, as none other who has ever lived could say: "I do always the things that please Him." But a wider comradeship must now be His. He was born that God might walk with men. To John He went, that He might be publicly credentialed. A visible and audible Divine manifestation declared the Divineness of His Person and His mission: "This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased." Once and for all He was ordained for His Redemptive task. Son of man, Son of God. Here we have the secret of Comradeship between God and man.

After ordination what next? Comradeship—on a new and higher basis, with human personalities. Andrew, then Peter, then Philip, then Nathanael, then John, James and others of the Twelve. The circle widened. Comradeship with the Carpenter transformed crude, unlettered fishermen, craftsmen, publicans, centurions, merchants into educated, cultivated, influential, earnest leaders, advocates and even martyrs. It cast a sacred spell over their lives ennobling and empowering. These apostles and disciples walked with Him, talked with Him, worked with Him, prayed with Him, until, through Comradeship, they became like Him. What a privilege to have seen Him, to have heard Him, to have shared with Him deprivations, growingly to have comprehended the marvelousness of His matchless life and the glory of His sacrificial love! They saw His sympathy and His sorrow. They stood astounded at His wisdom and His power. They saw

Him raise the dead, heal the sick, cleanse lepers and communicate Himself to pleading human hearts. They beheld Him under persecution. Some of them saw His arrest and later saw Him go to His Cross. The Comradeship, seemingly broken by death, was gloriously but blessedly resumed, when He fulfilled His own prophecy and came forth from the tomb. Comradeship then re-created them. They became the witnesses who fanned the spark of faith into a flame of devotion. They constituted the first Church. They were the pillars in the new Temple of God.

What is Comradeship with the Carpenter today? The power of the Carpenter to grip and hold the hearts of men has not lessened one iota with the passing centuries. The same ennobling and exalting influence is exerted on the lives of those who make a Comrade of the Carpenter today, as when He walked with His disciples in Galilee and Judea. The Exalted Christ wants Comrades. He said: "Henceforth I call you not servants, but I have called you friends." The highest of all human privileges is the privilege of fellowship, Comradeship with God through Comradeship with the Carpenter. It is this close association and communion that will dissolve all doubts regarding His Saviourhood. We talk about Him, but do we talk *with* Him and *to* Him as we should. A visualized Christ is an available Christ. Contact with Jesus today is as necessary as when His visible touch communicated health to the sick, sight to the blind, hearing to the deaf and life to the dead, during His sojourn in Galilee and Judea, twenty centuries ago.

This is the Comradeship Jesus promised when He said: "Lo, I am with you alway." Men become incredulous, hesitant, doubtful regarding the Incarnation, the Resurrection, and that marvelous miracle, Regeneration, when they cease to enjoy the Comradeship of the Carpenter-Christ.

What wonder that people cease to find any thrilling joy in Christian life and service when the Great Friend and Comrade is no longer thought of as such, but vaguely conceived of as in the distant Glory, interested perhaps, but in no definite way a participant in the affairs of life here and now! The nearness of the Master needs new emphasis right now. The slogan, "Get right with God," is good. Another equally important is "Get close to God." Immanuel—God with us—this is a soul-stirring thought. This is the soul-thrilling Evangel for this hour when so many are losing the idea of fellowship with a Personal God. Only Comradeship with the Carpenter will develop a sense of the Divine Presence indispensable to soul transformation and satisfaction. It is thus He will take you into His confidence and disclose the secret of a happy, progressive Christian life.

Who best understands a little child—the anatomist, who will describe every part of the physical frame and discourse upon the function of each member of the body; the psychologist, who enters into the wonders of mental action and reaction; the philosopher, who coolly calculates the why and wherefore of human conduct; or the mother, whose maternal understanding and sympathy gives her an insight into the very mystery of life

itself? Who best understands the Carpenter-Christ—the presumptive self-sufficient materialist who recognizes only what he can weigh and measure and who at the outset denies the possibility of anything beyond the visible and tangible, or he who has discovered the great secret of wisdom through Comradeship with the Carpenter of Nazareth, now exalted and enthroned, yet nearer than the nearest friend of earth?

If you have doubts, tell the Comrade, and He will dissolve them. If you have grief, tell Him, and He will share it with you. Make the Carpenter your Comrade, and the whole Gospel story becomes intelligible, believable and natural. “The Comrade in White” was no myth, no illusion, no delusion. He was on the battlefield. He is on every battlefield of life today. He is the Friend, Counsellor, and Comforter of His Comrades. He will be Comrade to those who trust Him, love Him and obey Him.

For them there is nothing He cannot and will not do.

II

CHANGING LIFE'S INCLINE FROM DOWN TO UP

THEN SPAKE THE CARPENTER: "Follow me."
—JOHN 1:43.

WHEN you stop to think of it, it was marvelous. The fulfilment of every human obligation; the secret of all power, the realization of every high ideal—all told in two words! Who dare utter a word like that to earth's millions? It was marvelous when you stop to *think* of it; if you do not think, then nothing is marvelous. Yesterday, shavings; today, salvation. The carpenter shop at Nazareth one day and the next, Divine ordination for world redemption! One day fashioning yokes, the next calling to Himself yoke-fellows.

The claim to world leadership is a stupendous claim. The ordinary man who would proclaim it would be passed by as a poor deluded lunatic. Not so the Nazarene. Credentialled, immediately He sought comradeship. It was all sublime. The baptism, the descent of the Spirit; the Voice—the Divine acclaim: "Thou art my beloved son, in thee I am well pleased." The sublimity of it all is equaled only by its simplicity. We confuse and complicate Christianity. The Carpenter was definite, direct, brief, but comprehensive. He

offered no new philosophy of life. He did not talk of "New thought." He did not propose a new Constitution. He did not present a royal octavo volume of instructions and directions. He indicated that the whole requirement consisted in following Himself. To the query: "What shall I do to find rest and peace," He answered: "Follow me." "How can I break with the things that destroy me?" "Follow me." "How can I secure the favor of the Eternal God?" "Follow me." "How can I bear burdens that are crushing me, meet disappointments that discourage me, rise above appetites that are consuming me?" "Follow me." "Is there nothing beyond this?" "Nothing." "Are there not mystical features in Christianity which must be understood before I can be received into full discipleship?" "None; follow me." These two words tell the whole story of the ascending life. Christward movements are always upward, never downward. Following the Carpenter means giving to life an upward direction. It changes life from down to up. That is the deep meaning of the Christian life. Simple? Yes, but tremendously exacting, after all.

The inauguration of new world movements is not only interesting but thrilling. The greatest movement in human history was being inaugurated when Jesus of Nazareth, having been baptized, turned to the men nearest Him and said: "Follow me." It was Ezekiel's vision of the tiny stream flowing from beneath the altar and starting on its course of world irrigation. "And everything shall live, whithersoever the river cometh." At last it shall be broad, deep, "waters to swim in, a

river that could not be passed over." "Despise not the day of small things." As Christianity began, so it has been continued. The Carpenter presented Himself as the solution of all of this world's spiritual problems, the solvent of all of its ills, the victory in every battle. "Do you want truth?" "Follow me." "Do you want power?" "Follow me." "Do you want righteousness?" "Follow me."

The Carpenter proposed nothing less than world revolution through Comradeship with Himself. How audacious! But He did it. Can you think of anything more difficult than to establish a new religion? The great Positivist complained because people were so slow to take up with the religion of humanity. A shrewd observer said: "Live a perfect life, work miracles, heal the sick and raise the dead, then go and be crucified, then rise from the dead; and you will not lack for followers." Here we find a hint of what "Follow me" involved. It is no easy half-hearted drifting with the tide, without purpose and without effort. When the Carpenter said "Follow me," it meant the "Me" whose coming had been heralded by poets and prophets for a thousand years. The "Me" whose birth had been announced to the Nazareth Virgin. The "Me" whose coming had been attended by angel choirs. The "Me" whose life had been untouched by a single sin. The "Me" credentialed by God Almighty, at His baptism, as "God's only begotten Son." The "Me" who was later to speak as never man spake; live as never man lived, die as never man died, come forth from the tomb in complete mastery of death, ascend to the Glory

which He had with the Father before the world was. "Follow me" did not mean following one who was born just as other men are born, unannounced and through natural generation. It did not mean following one whose life was limited and moulded by the conditions of the age in which he lived. It did not mean following one who was somewhat superior, yet entirely one of the human family, no more Divine than others. It meant following the Christ of the Gospels into a life of self-effacement, self-surrender to the will of the Eternal Father; following Him through cloud and storm and trial, to and through Calvary. Not all this was unfolded at the moment. The Divine Unveiling takes time. It was a gradual revealing that finally made the Comrades *know* the Christ.

Watch the steps of inauguration of Comradeship with the Carpenter. We are standing on the watershed of revelation. It is a moment weighted with two eternities, the one already past and the other just being born. The wilderness had been ringing with the word of the Baptist, "Repent." He had reached the culmination of his splendid and illustrious career. His star, long in the ascendant, was just about to pass into eclipse, or rather be lost in the glory of the greater light of the Sun of Righteousness. The water courses will now run in two directions, one toward the ocean of God's love and the other moving toward the gleaming sands of time, to be for the moment swallowed up.

Three days in succession the proclamation of the Great Arrival had been made in the mystic words: "Behold the Lamb of God." Out from the sea of

eternity, God had landed on the shores of time, and was standing now among men, offering Himself as the sum of all Beatitude and the source of all Salvation. Right then and there began the movement that has filled the world with a new song of hope and has given to man the power that makes for victory. Right then began the teaching, the doing, the living and the loving, that was to awaken humanity from its death slumber, and its evil deeds, and by vivifying, and vitalizing, transform deserts to gardens of beauty. Here is one who will "baptize with the Holy Ghost and with fire."

How much hinges on an ordinary introduction! God Almighty was introducing Himself to the world, in the person of His Son. Is it possible to evaluate the meaning of those moments? What did it mean to untold myriads of men and women who have heard the Divine Voice and have followed?

The two disciples heard Him speak and followed Jesus. Whom did they hear? The voice of John the Baptist: "Behold the Lamb of God, that taketh away the sins of the world." This was exactly what the world had waited for, for generations. How glorious is a positive true testimony! It was this witness of John, heard by the two disciples of John, that led them to follow Jesus. Whom did they follow? A man? Yes. A prophet? Yes. An affable genial personality? Yes. The One who had baffled the doctors in the temple while yet He was but a child? Yes. But was that all? By no means. No, they followed Him who was the embodiment of what John testified when he said: "Behold the Lamb of God." They followed—the

Lamb of God. That is what it means to obey the command of the Carpenter, "Follow me."

They followed a great doctrine, but a doctrine incarnate. They followed a living creed. To follow Jesus is vastly more than to follow a man, even though he be a superman, from whose lips flowed wisdom as sweet waters flow from a living fountain; whose words were as honey in the honeycomb. "This is the Son of God," was the testimony. They followed then "the Lamb of God," the Saviour; "the Son of God" who had come to bring a lost world back to God. That is what it means to "follow me." That is the true discipleship, which has been for nearly two thousand years winning a world and building a kingdom. You are not following Jesus unless you are following the Jesus credentialed by God at the Jordan, the world's Redeemer and, by that token, the world's Friend.

That is a marvelous example presented in John the Baptist, who watched his followers leave him and attach themselves to the Carpenter without a pang of regret. "He must increase but I must decrease." He was willing to be forgotten, if only "the true light that lighteth every man that cometh into the world" should be followed.

Jesus saw the two disciples, one of whom was Andrew, Simon Peter's brother, following. Inquiry is always answered, if it be sincere. "Whom seek ye?" Had He met them before? More than likely. What He now wished to learn was their motive. There are thousands of professed followers of Jesus who have been prompted by the fact that it is respectable to be a

Christian. There are others who desire to be in good company and find it advantageous to keep in touch with Christian people. Motive is everything. Why did you unite with the church? Thousands read the Bible who never find God. Curiosity, a desire to become better acquainted with the philosophy and the psychology of Christianity, has brought many people to an outward profession, who do not see in Jesus Christ "the Lamb of God." In response to the question of the Carpenter, we hear for the first time, as applied to Jesus, the word Master.

How different from the arrogant self-sufficiency that repudiates the need of any master, and vainly supposes that every man carries in himself all he needs for both goodness and greatness.

That one word is the line of demarcation between the two great classes, each of which claims a right to the name Christian. One class, recognizing the Carpenter as the Son of God, utters in seriousness and humility the word "Master" or "Teacher." It is a confession of need. It is a declaration of readiness to learn of truth eternal from Him who alone can speak with authority of things Divine. The other class represent the idea that Christ can lay claim to adoration and implicit obedience. A great character? Yes. One to be worshiped? No. The difference is great indeed. Jesus knew the one way to impress upon those who were purposing Comradeship with Him that He could not accept them as Comrades on any other basis than obedience, was to ask them, and call from them the truth regarding, their motive in following. "What

seek ye?" Men find what they look for. Some men find the beasts of the jungle in Africa, while others find missions and missionary work which is concerned, not with animals, but immortal souls. When you study the Bible what seek ye? Literature? Well, you will find it at its best. Ethics? Then you will find the one and only true ethic. Salvation? You will not be disappointed. Something to criticize or texts you can quote to support some fancied mistake of Moses? You will find that, too. You find what you seek in men and women about you. It is preëminently true that you will find in the Carpenter just what you look for. He is the Lamb of God. He is the Son of God, whatever you may find or fail to find. If you approach the Carpenter of Nazareth with the word Master, He will reveal Himself to you as the Mightiest among the Mighty and the Holiest among the Holy.

They asked: "Where dwellest thou?" The suggestion is the hope of further association and fellowship. They wished the intimate connection with this new-found teacher, leader, Saviour, which would unfold the great realities of time and eternity. "Come and see." The royal invitation to an abiding comradeship!

Thus at the very outset Jesus made it clear that what He wants is intimacy with His followers. "Come"—this was the glad word of Him who was the full manifestation and expression of God. How different from the conception of God entertained by the mass of humanity when Christ came! God was feared but not loved. He was thought of as bent on the punishment

and destruction of the disobedient. The idea that He would be willing to enter into a real comradeship with man, was never entertained. With open arms the great loving Father, through His Son, cried: "Come!" They followed. They stayed with Him. For two days such fellowship was enjoyed as earth had never before witnessed. Here was the beginning of Comradeship with the Carpenter which constitutes real Christian living. Andrew could not enjoy this fellowship alone. Contact with the Carpenter awakens immediately the sharing spirit and the sharing habit. Fellowship with Jesus crucifies pride and selfishness and develops a keen interest in those who do not know the blessedness of companionship with God. This sharing spirit is a Christian product. Was there a hospital in the world before Jesus came? Were there any retreats, asylums, homes for the unfortunate? None recorded. In the records of great famines do you find such works of relief as the Red Cross of our day? Benevolence and charity are the result of comradeship with the Carpenter. One cannot walk with Him, talk with Him, pray to Him, without imbibing His Spirit of world-wide love.

Andrew was not content to enjoy this new-found life alone. He rushed off to his brother, with the exultant cry: "We have found the Messiah!" He did not argue about it. You have never known a man to be saved by argument. He did not enter into a long dissertation. "He brought him to Jesus." If that had not worked, then Peter would never have become a disciple. It is the one and only way of convincing men

that the Messiah is here. Take them to Him. First know you have found Him, then, by a warm testimony and loving interest, lead another and then another to Jesus. "Win one more."

When Simon that day went with his brother and found Christ, a luminous truth broke upon the world. It is this, that when one enters into comradeship with Christ he is in very reality a new person. He has a new name. There is no distinction of which one should be prouder than the distinction of being a Christian. Jesus said to Simon: "Thou art Simon, Son of Jona. Thou shalt be called Peter, a stone."

A name stands for a personality. A new name means a new personality. Jesus gives us His own name. We become Christ-i-ans. Henceforth ye shall be called Christ-ian, He says to the new believer.

Who could have dreamed, when the two disciples heard Him speak and followed Him, inaugurating the new movement called Christianity, that the Carpenter would win Comrades until, as now, five hundred millions rejoice to say: "I am a Comrade of the Carpenter."

Then Jesus found Philip. Here is the practical application of the seeking shepherd. Divine concern for comradeship, that is the blessed thought. He is still seeking for Comrades. In the shop, the store, the counting room, the farm, everywhere. What an encouragement to discipleship, that God makes it His concern whether or not we know and love Him. Philip found Nathanael. One by one, the additions to the circle are made. Personal aggressiveness in winning

men to the Master is what we mean by evangelism. It is tremendously effective. The need was never greater than today. Find some one. The most interesting activity in the world, is bringing men into fellowship with Jesus Christ. It is wonderful what can be done with the most unlikely subjects. The saveableness of every man must be an article of faith, or we will neglect our opportunities. Philip announced the greatest discovery a human being ever makes. He said: "Thou art the Son of God. Thou are the King of Israel." The genius of man is wonderful. The courage of great discoverers is beyond praise. But human invention and human discovery reach their climax in the discovery of the Nazareth Carpenter as the Christ of God, the Saviour of the world. Following Jesus is the highest privilege, with the largest rewards, to be found among men. Follow Him. Follow Him to life, to light, to truth, to glory! Follow Him when the road is rough and the day is dying and dangers are on every hand. Follow Him in your struggle for the best. It is following Jesus that changes the incline of life from down to up.

This is the great business of Christianity, to change the course of life and give it an upward swing. However slight at the first, the upward incline will land him who follows it at the throne, where a closer companionship than earth affords will be the experience of every Comrade of the Carpenter. The one great thing proclaimed at the very outset, when Christianity was just beginning, was comradeship with God through the Carpenter of Nazareth. In a new and wonderful way,

man was being linked to God. It is the highway to the Highest.

Follow Him, and you will think Divinely. Man reaches his best in mentality when he "has the mind of Christ." Follow Him, and nobility of feeling, with all of its exhilarations and noble enthusiasms, will follow. Follow Him, and your will power will become masterful. Follow Him in working, and service will be sanctified and commonplace work become a holy thing. Follow Him, in His solicitude for the happiness and exaltation of mankind, and your life will become a resistless appeal, winning a world to God and truth and duty and nobility and peace.

Amid the babel of voices today His voice is ringing clear, "Follow me."

III

WATER, WINE AND A WEDDING

THEN SPAKE THE CARPENTER: "Fill the water-pots with water, . . . Bear to the governor of the feast."—JOHN 2:7-8.

THE most significant events of life are sanctified by Divine recognition. "There was a wedding in Cana of Galilee." A Wedding—the event superlative. A culmination, a consummation, an inauguration. Wooing, winning, waiting, willing, then—a wedding! What an event! The sum total of personality, mind, heart, spirit—all in action. The divinest of emotions, the sublimest purposing! Covenant, in its most holy expression—all ordained of High Heaven! Eden! "And the Lord brought unto the man the woman which he had made." "And they twain shall be one." Blossoms, bells, blessings! A wedding! What word of our language is more weighted with meaning than the word home? The wedding is laying the corner-stone of a great institution, a home. Corner-stones are laid amid great ceremonial. But what institution can compare with the home in its possibilities of weal or woe? Every wedding means abounding joy, with an inevitable sorrow when one or the other is called to the Home eternal. Lights and shadows all along the way. Trial and triumph, joys and jolts, and all vastly more significant because two, and not one, experience the successive events of life.

The Carpenter and His Comrades at a wedding! The social relationships of life are matters of concern to Jesus Christ. Christianity is tremendously interested in home-making and home-makers. What the home is, that will the nation be. The home is the sacred center of those emotions and principles that make organized society progressive or retrogressive. A wedding should always have the seal of religion.

— Why Cana? Jesus was not born in a metropolis. He was not raised in a conspicuous center of political and social influence. Bethlehem His birthplace, and Nazareth His home. It was to say, He proposed to enter the simplicities and commonplaces of life and exalt them. Indeed, there is nothing commonplace to the Carpenter, if it has to do with human happiness and personal ennoblement. So He came to Cana. No matter how small the hamlet in which your life is spent, or how humble the cottage where you abide, your Comradeship with the Carpenter may be as sweet and life-giving as though you dwelt in a palace at the very center of world influence. Many a cottage in a sequestered valley, far away from the marts of trade, has been the place selected of God for the fullest manifestation of His love, and the place where He could develop His leaders for splendid Kingdom movements. How often Sir Walter Scott yearned for the simplicities and blessedness of the little cottage where he began his wonderful career, after he had moved into the palace at Abbotsford! The Carpenter has the faculty of sanctifying all with which He deals and of lifting to high levels all He touches. It is not where you are born

or where you live that signifies, but what is in you of God and goodness, and what you *do* with the powers of mind and heart with which you are endowed.

“The Mother of Jesus was there.” An occasion is made eventful by the personalities represented. What a touch of beauty is given to the story in revealing the fact that Mary was present. How she must have graced any and every occasion where she was an honored guest. What an atmosphere she would create! We do not worship the Virgin Mary, but it is a question whether or not we sufficiently venerate the Mother of our Lord. Were we to think more of her pure beautiful consecration to the holy task of motherhood, would not chivalry be more common? Womanhood might be treated with greater consideration, and a kindly courtesy more practiced, were we to dwell on the fact that God Almighty chose a woman to be the agency of His coming to earth as the world’s Saviour.

There is a pitiful lack of gallantry today. The grace and beauty of womanhood as such is forgotten, with the result that the finer qualities of manhood have scant expression. Man should be chivalric, kindly, sympathetic, considerate of woman, because he owes life itself to her, and also because he owes it to woman that God was manifest in the flesh, uniting humanity and Divinity in one sacred personality. The event at Cana has an added beauty because “The Mother of Jesus was there.” Have you ever noted that a large number of the events and incidents narrated in the Gospels are anonymous? The wedding at Cana is anonymously reported. Thus it may represent any and every wed-

ding in the world. Just as we dedicate a monument to "The Unknown Soldier," so the wedding at Cana represents any and every marriage feast and any and every marriage altar, among all races and peoples.

Then came the Carpenter. Invited? Of course. He and His comrades are honored guests. Their arrival is at a moment of embarrassment. Happy the bride and groom fully conscious that Jesus has honored the occasion by His approving presence. It will make every difference with the feast and what follows. It is doubtful if any marriage is a worthy marriage unless the Carpenter has come to hallow the ceremony. No sooner has Jesus arrived than an embarrassing situation develops. The wine has given out! It is quite possible to lose the wondrous beauty and mighty meaning of this event in the life of Jesus by discussing the nature of the wine at this wedding. How easy to lose the soul-thrilling music of an Oratorio by centering thought upon some one instrument in the accompanying orchestra, discussing what it is, by whom made, and just who is playing it. You can lose entirely the splendors of a wonderful landscape by occupying the mind in a contemplation of the glass through which you are looking. Wine was universally used, and Jesus conformed to custom, unless there was some sufficient reason for breaking with it. The wine failed. It represents the emergencies of life in which we are inadequate to meet conditions. Such experiences are sure. No matter how carefully you have anticipated your needs, the hour comes in every life when demand is greater than natural supply. Some great and unexpected emergency

reveals our weakness, our insufficiency. There will be a time in life when the natural ardor of youth is not enough. The wine of natural ability will have been turned out, and there will be nothing to take its place, unless you have been careful to have the Comradeship of the Carpenter. It is a sad thing to come right up against the impossible, with no Christ upon whom you have been accustomed to call. Praying will seem strange to you, because you have not learned the language of prayer nor the way whereby assistance can be secured. He is wise who carries his letter of credit with him, so that his petition will be honored and his wants supplied.

Instinctively in life's emergencies men turn to God. At Cana how came it that the eyes were turned to Jesus? There was an attitude of confidence and expectation. "Whatever he saith unto you, do it." The words of His mother. She knew. She *understood*.

To whom shall we turn in the moments of great stress, disappointment and embarrassment, if not to Him who has met every emergency of life for every child of humanity since He walked among men? To whom shall we look for direction if not to the great Comrade? He will always be the one whose word is finally authoritative. The appeal to Christ is always successful and abundantly rewarded. Mary did not say: "Use your best judgment as to what is best to do. Your own past experiences must be your authority. You have in yourself all that is necessary to meet the present need." She knew better. It was not a ques-

tion of natural resource but of Divine resource. "Whatsoever he saith unto thee, do that." It is the safe course today, just as it was at the Cana wedding.

The direction is unmistakably plain. "Fill the water-pots with water." Nothing could seem more unlikely to meet the need of the moment. It is a question of implicit faith and hearty obedience. Precisely so it is with respect to religious duty. The underlying reasons are not always apparent. Subordinate features are not fully understood. There is much that is mysterious. What matters it, if the great main duty is made clear? There was nothing unreasonable about the requirement. But there was nothing about it that gave immediate assurance of success, beyond the fact that it was Jesus who made the demand. The lesson is that of implicit obedience and of great expectation. What is rarer than obedience that does not quibble over details and hesitate until the opportunity has passed? The striking thing in the little story, "Taking a Message to Garcia," is that the messenger accepted the commission without a single question, because he trusted the wisdom of his chief. He went. He went immediately. He went cheerfully. He delivered the message, and his mission was a success. Ordinarily request or command meets with: "Why?" Our obedience is not an irrational one. The Carpenter requests nothing of His Comrades that is against reason. He does not, however, give all His reasons. He wants to be trusted.

"They filled the water-pots to the brim." Large expectation! They wanted the largest and the best, and

so asked for it. It is no mark of either faith or wisdom to ask meagerly. When you ask favors of royalty you expect them to be on a royal scale.

*"Thou art coming to a King—
Large petitions with thee bring."*

Expect the biggest, the greatest, the best, in your prayers. That is an utterly false idea of prayer which excludes belief in definite action on God's part to meet a human need. That is indeed the very essence of the meaning of prayer. Of course, there is subjective advantage, aside from the gift desired. Comrades of the Carpenter get into closer touch with Him through petition. But they get much more than an exalted feeling and a sense of nearness to Him. They get what they need to meet any emergency of life. At Cana when the wine failed what they wanted was not a little better feeling and little closer Comradeship. They wanted wine—and they got it. Hold to the thought that the Carpenter today has within Himself everything needed by His Comrades. Jesus was not going about Galilee making wine for people promiscuously. Here was an opportunity to show once and for all that God has an interest in the social relationships of life. Here was a chance to make a definite demonstration of what prayer will do for humanity. He took advantage of it and taught the lesson.

The munificence of God is emphasized. He gives abundantly above all that we ask or think. Jesus at the wedding exceeded all expectations and went a long way beyond the absolute need.

Comrades of the Carpenter never despise the use of means. Jesus utilized the water to accomplish His work. That is an idle prayer which ignores all means for healing and for meeting the needs of life. Every means available should be employed. Up to a certain point we must answer our own prayers. If the water-jars had not been filled with water, there would have been no wine. Do your part, or stop praying.

How definitely we are taught that only the outpoured life can expect to enjoy the inflow of Divine power and love! "Bear to the governor of the feast." Until they did, the power was not working. It is useless to expect anything of Jesus Christ today if we are simply to make what we receive a felicity and not a force. We receive just what we are willing to use to His glory. Life may always increase in worth and in loveliness. "Thou hast kept the good wine until now." Cheering thought. With the advancing years there may be a growing value and worthfulness to personality. All depends on the immediateness of our contact with Jesus Christ. Only the Comrades of the Carpenter can experience this glad satisfaction of constant betterment. The wine of life should have a better flavor as time passes, and our gifts enrich humanity more and more. Why should life grow stale and wearisome? It need not. Perpetual youth, together with the added virility which experience will bring, will reserve the best wine to the last.

The Carpenter is still working this old-time miracle. He is effecting transformations in the lives of His Comrades. He is improving both the quality and the

quantity of life. He pours His own vital forces into a soul and, lo, the mind acts more vigorously and with greater accuracy. Intellectually the wine improves with years of fellowship with Him. He transforms ordinary moralities into deep and lasting spiritualities. Mind, soul and body, all find their best through the inflow of the life of Christ today.

“This beginning of miracles Jesus did, and manifested his glory.” Then the purpose of the miracle was not to satisfy curiosity and not primarily to meet a physical need. It had a high objective. It was to authenticate what Jesus was saying and doing, and would later do. The balance must be kept between the humanity and the divinity of Jesus at that early and initial stage of His ministry. His comrades must be intellectually and spiritually stabilized. This miracle did it for them, and opened the way for the greater works Jesus was about to perform.

He manifested His glory. First, He then and there declared Himself in full authority over the world He had created. “Without him was not anything made that was made.” It is quite the vogue today in some quarters to dismiss Jesus Christ as a working force in His world. No mistake could be greater. It is easy to forget, when we are dealing with material things, that God is the God of nature and the Master of His Universe and all of its forces. Jesus Christ as the agent of creation, by whose own energy the worlds were made, has not lessened in His creative power, but sustains the material world by the very energy that created it. What is a miracle? It seems strange indeed that

the world has stumbled over this matter of the supernatural at it has. We need more and more to recognize the fact that God indwells everything. Immanency is the term we employ to indicate the *hereness* and *nowness* of God. He has never left nature to work out its own destiny. He stays with His world. The whole universe is kept and unfolded by the very power that brought it into being. It is a miracle when it is a manifestation of God, with the evident purpose of authenticating a message, credentialing a person, or accomplishing some benefit and conferring some blessing that could not be given in the ordinary way. If the will of God is in nature, as well as His energy, then what more natural than that His will and His energy will be exhibited in an extraordinary manner to meet any need which could not otherwise be met?

Nature is plastic in the hands of Christ. It is obedient. When religion comes upon the scene of human inquiry and human activity, it accomplishes what science is not qualified to accomplish and does not pretend to do. Miracle is the emergence of the energy of God not ordinarily manifest, because not ordinarily necessary. It is the emergence of what all along had existed but had not needed expression. The divine energy was already in the water before Jesus turned it into wine, but the occasion brought forth the result. The energy of God which blossoms into miracle when His glory and the good of mankind demands it is all the time in nature. In miracle it comes to light. It is a creative energy just as really as the power expressed when the world was brought into being. If you deny

the first creation, then of course you will doubt miracle. Once accept the fact, which is a fact, that nature and natural law are names for the usual expressions of Divine power, and miracles will not trouble you.

There is a great social need today. Homes are rent asunder by the exhaustion of the supply of the wine of loyalty. The sacred covenant of marriage must be restored to its God-given place. Jesus Christ in the home is the solution of our social ills. He and He alone can soften the aspersions, increase the mutual loyalties, beautify domestic relations, and give home its rightful place as a civilizing and Christianizing force. The comradeship of husband and wife furnishes the proper basis for comradeship between parents and children. Comradeship with the Carpenter is the one indispensable need, to make home what the word signifies, a habitation where every spiritual beauty flourishes and every natural impulse is itself spiritualized.

The sanctions of religion are tremendously important at the marriage altar. The Miracle-working Comrade is a witness to every covenant, and when He is made a Comrade in daily life, infelicities are forgotten in the blessedness of coöperation and mutual beatitude.

It is easy to hang the legend, "God Bless Our Home," on the wall; it is quite another thing to determine yourself to become a beatitude to every member of your own household. Homes will never be more than mere habitations until the covenant of marriage is stamped with the signet ring of God Almighty through His Son, the Carpenter-Christ.

IV

THE BATTLE FOR BREAD

THEN SPAKE THE CARPENTER: "My Father worketh hitherto, and I work."—JOHN 5:17.

WORK—the dynamic word of the English language! Speak it, and you hear the music of a million anvils. Write it, and pictures portraying the progress of all lands and all ages appear before your vision. Sing it, and all the harmonies of music and all the beauties of art furnish a Divine melody. It is a compelling word. It is explosive, revealing inner potencies immeasurably great. In it is locked up the story of world progress since time began to be. It holds in its grasp the present and the future. Go to the Avenue of Sphinxes in Egypt, and look about you. An ancient and forgotten civilization performed prodigies of labor, building splendid cities, edifices that would honor any modern metropolis. A forest of stone constituting the magnificent temples that stood on the banks of the Nile represented the limitless achievements of work. Toiling millions constructed the pyramids. Massive masonry, which would be handled with difficulty even with all the skill of engineering so well applied today, speaks of herculean effort in bygone days.

The prone pillars which mark the ruins of Ephesus,

though mute, yet eloquently testify to the possibilities of work. The fluted columns, with beautifully chiseled capitals, still remaining on the Acropolis at Athens, give us the secret of the preëminence of Greece in that faraway day when Socrates taught ethics on a higher plane of spiritual beauty than any man of his day, when Plato discoursed on philosophy and furnished a basis for the learned of the earth who were to follow him. Physical, intellectual and moral work. That is the secret.

From Phidias to Canova and then to Rodin the story is always the same; not genius alone but indefatigable toil, has produced the magnificent sculptures that adorn our palaces of art. Visit the great Art Galleries of the world, and, while acknowledging genius, we have to recognize that every great canvas and every beautiful piece of sculpture represents more of work than genius. In every civilized nation splendid public libraries offer the best thoughts of the best thinkers of all the ages. Miles and miles of shelves hold the treasures of truth that from time to time have been disclosed by men of intellectual power. Here again the one commanding thought is work. How little can we measure the unremitting toil that has produced the books representing the wisdom and knowledge of the ages!

The British Museum represents man's masterfulness in a thousand directions, but it speaks loudly of laborious days and nights in which multitudes have given their best to humanity. The dominant note heard as you walk through the magnificent collections of art, and also the wonders of invention, mechanical devices

of ten thousand kinds, is represented by that one short significant word, work.

Ocean highways now connect nation with nation, making the whole world one. The word transportation has in it a world of meaning. It is the key to the larger civilization. You think at once of the massive and splendid palaces of the sea which connect shore with shore and bring distant peoples into neighborly relations with each other. You see a continent threaded with steel and woven together with paved highways. You think of numberless engines, representing the highest skill of mechanical engineers, trailing behind them tens of thousands of cars weighted with agricultural products and every kind of merchandise. All is told in a single word, work.

The feeding of fifteen hundred millions of people daily is a contract none but God Almighty could undertake. That is what He has pledged Himself to provide for. The earth is indeed the mother of us all. It is Divinely provided that earth always can and always does furnish a sufficiency to satisfy the physical needs of all the inhabitants of this planet. Dearth with famine in one locality, is never so great that there is not still an abundance if it were properly distributed. The bow in the cloud, that became the signet ring of the Almighty after the flood, has never pledged in vain. But to make the wealth of earth available in feeding and housing the inhabitants of the five continents, just one thing is necessary—work. Toilers on land and sea are engaged in the stupendous task of making the available, the availing. What is the motive in all this pro-

digious toil? Not work for work's sake, poetical as that sounds, and possible as it might be in a perfected world of perfected characters. "Art for art's sake," is a slogan that carries with it much of sentiment and still more idealism. No, the hard fact is that, whether in producing bread or making tools or constructing machines or building highways, or even disimprisoning angels from marble, or objectifying ideals on canvas, the commanding and controlling thing has been bread. Earth's millions have always been engaged in the battle for bread. It is this that sends the carpenter to his bench, the machinist to his lathe, the architect to his draughting, the merchant to his store, the manufacturer to his factory, the student to his desk, and so on through the long list of activities and occupations. Artist and artisan have as a rule faced the stern necessity of making a living, however much they may have endeavored at the same time to make a life. However unselfishly and however ideally men have fulfilled duty and faced their tasks, the fact remains that, for the multitudes, keeping soul and body together, with what additional comforts and luxuries may be enjoyed, explains the world's work.

A workless life is a worthless life. The struggle for existence has been necessary, to overcome the lure of luxury. Everything that moves inclines to stop moving. The ball you throw into the air stops when the initial force is spent. Only a mighty incentive could keep humanity working. But when men cease to work they begin to die. We are so constituted that only work will prevent deterioration and finally death. The

unworked limb hangs helpless at the side. Idleness and parasitism are unforgivable crimes. Hence it is ordained—work or starve. The battle for bread is insistent. It is fierce. It is a war that knows no discharge. Burdens are heavy. Blistered feet on burning highways; calloused hands hardened by toil; bowed forms and aching heads—these are the hard facts of life. For centuries this toil was carried on with no eye to pity and no voice to express sympathy, from any visible Being above man. Tears mingled with the tears of friends and neighbors and kinsmen. The poor were always exploited. The multitudes were made the sport of the winds of circumstance; bodies were broken on the wheel of servitude; work was a calamity that had to be endured. God was not known.

Then came the Carpenter! Compassion, instead of cold synicism and cruelty; sympathy, instead of sordid selfishness; helpfulness, instead of heartlessness. In the battle for bread nothing cheers, encourages, helps, like knowing God cares. This is precisely what the Carpenter proceeded to teach. When throngs of people followed Him and His comrades, it is recorded: "And seeing the multitude he had compassion on them." It was a hungry multitude of workers whom Jesus saw and on whom He had compassion. There are few things Jesus ever said that more endear Him to the toilers of earth than His word of compassion and His open and proud claim to be a workman Himself: "I work." "I have compassion on the multitude." In these words the Carpenter set the Divine seal on honest toil.

The faculties and forces of man, physical, mental and spiritual, can never be safely neglected. Moreover, one form of toil is as good as another, and as worthy of recognition as another, provided the purpose be right. The man with the hoe is not the only worker. The mechanic cannot have all the glory of being a workman. Jesus was a Carpenter. That very fact endears Him to earth's toilers. Yes, but Jesus never worked as hard in the carpenter shop, as He worked by the shores of blue Galilee or among the Judean hills, proclaiming and illustrating the love of God. It took vastly more energy to heal the sick, allay fevers and raise the dead, than to wield the axe, shave the plane or the saw.

And the Carpenter said: "Come unto me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest." His promise is to the honest toiler, seeking to fulfil a mission in the world. No immunity from hard, wearying labor is promised Christians. When the Carpenter called His Comrades He said: "Follow me, and I will make you fishers of men." They were still to be workmen. He exhorted His followers: "Work while it is called today, for the night cometh in which no man can work." Diligence is an article of faith, with the true Comrade of the Carpenter. The "rest" He promised the weary, was the rest that comes from re-enforcement. What He promised was a sympathy and an imparted power which would lessen the burdensomeness of toil. He particularly warned them not to expect loaves and fishes to be multiplied in their interest, when they were able to provide for themselves.

A manna-fed people soon became a restless people.

Joshua could never have taken the land of Canaan with a manna-fed army. Today the Church can do nothing with idlers and camp followers. God puts no premium on leisure. The very thing most of us covet would prove our undoing. The percentage of the scions of wealth who achieve great things in the world is small indeed. It is from the farm, the forge, the workshop and the marts of trade, where men are at work, God finds His leaders in important epochs. The building eras in the world's history have been eras when work has been recognized as the primary requisite to power and honor.

Christianity can never discharge its duty without manifesting a deep interest in the world's workers. Until we are able to ethicalize industry we shall not have fulfilled our mission. The battle for bread is needlessly severe, because industry has not been ethicalized. Competitions are fierce. Labor is not adequately rewarded, except in certain trades. The multitudes have never had their full share.

But do not forget what has been achieved since Jesus came. Then slavery was the rule and not the exception. Labor was frowned upon. The workman was little better than an animal of drudgery. Conditions have vastly improved. It has remained for the Comrades of the Carpenter to teach and preach and urge the application of the Golden Rule, the very best rule the mechanic ever carries. The Golden Rule in industry will never be effected by legislative enactments. Laws can assist in alleviating barbarous conditions, but they can never bring about that good will without which work will still

be done at great sacrifice of peace and comfort. With proper economic conditions, there would be no unemployment problem. The Church cannot be silent in the face of unrequited toil. A living wage must be a concern of the Church of God. Too readily we excuse ourselves from the unpopular task of protesting against inequalities and cruelties. If the Comrades of the Carpenter do not take a hand in bringing about better conditions and better rewards for the toilers, then no one will do it, and the compassion of the Carpenter will find no practical expression.

We often hear that the working classes are not interested in the Church. Two things may be said: first, that it is not true, since workmen are the mainstay of the Church today. The Church would speedily go down if she had to depend on those who sneer at labor for her support. The Church is on the whole a workman's church. By this term, of course, we include women as well as men. The second thing to be said is that if workmen are not interested in the Church, it is an evidence of inexcusable stupidity, because the Church is now and has always been the best and the only true friend the workman has had. The compassion of Jesus has found expression, all through the years, in His followers. No one appreciates the honorableness of toil as the comrades of Him who said: "My Father worketh hitherto, and I work."

Comradeship without sympathy is impossible. It is just because the Incarnate Son of God experienced the trials of the shop that today He can become the shopmate of men who are doing the work of the world.

If Jesus had not toiled, He would never have been understood. A "fellow-feeling" is created where another endures what we endure, suffers what we suffer, wearies as we weary, weeps as we weep. All these experiences Jesus passed through. That is why we know He is "touched with the feelings of our infirmities." He understands, when you return to your home at night wearied with the day's toil and sometimes ask yourself: "Does it pay?" He understands, when the body is bent and the hopelessness of it all looms up so large that enthusiasm dies. He worked. He, too, was weary. It is: "Come—I will give you rest," that has encouraged unnumbered multitudes to renew the battle for bread, day by day, and falter not in the fulfillment of duty. It wonderfully lessens the arduousness of toil to know that Divine sympathy will express itself in empowering and re-creating of body and mind.

Work must be honored as it has never been. More and more toil must be applauded, crowned. Save your contempt for the man who looks down on work and the worker. He it is who adds to the weight on the shoulders of labor. A larger fellow-feeling for all who are handicapped, and yet who continue in the race, should be ours.

There should be no stratification of mankind; but if there is stratification, let it be remembered that the honest laborer doing the day's work without a grouch is at the very top. The approval of the Carpenter was for the one who builds, the man or woman who is adding something to the wealth of the world by toil. The unrecognized and the undistinguished toilers are

pulling the world's chariot of progress forward. Greet them with a cheer! Day's work, alone, determines the wealth of nations and the growth of individuals. Loaves are not for loafers. The laborer in any and every field of labor is worthy of his hire. Equal pay for the same service, is the Gospel rule. A square deal for every human being must be the goal toward which the Church presses her claims in behalf of all. A free field and a fair chance, that every man may claim. To this end, we must Christianize governments. To this end, we must humanize and Christianize industry. There is no "well done" for drones and drifters. Idleness makes life futile, fruitless and flabby. The Carpenter would make comrades of all who accept Him and who purposefully invest their energies in the interests of a better world.

V

IN THE FIELDS AND AMONG THE LILIES WITH THE CARPENTER

THEN SPAKE THE CARPENTER: "Consider the lilies of the field, how they grow."—MATTHEW 6:28.

THE Carpenter was no obscurantist. He spake in parables. His parables were capable of diverse interpretations. They concealed the truth from him who purposed to use it for the Master's destruction. They revealed the truth to him who desired to avail himself of its blessings.

The parable is an amplified proverb. It is illustrative and presents difficult truths in a pictorial language, easy of comprehension. Everything in the Book of Revelation indicates the desire of God Almighty to make Himself understood. He wants to be personally known. From His first communication until the present hour, every method of which the human mind can conceive has been employed by the great Father to make His children know Him. Poetry, prophecy, theophany, symbol, parable, all have been employed to make the will of God known to man, and the very being of God sufficiently understood by man, to insure a real companionship.

Among the first acts of the Carpenter were manifestations of a kindly and sympathetic interest with

humanity in its sorrow and suffering. At the very outset, He proclaimed the goodness of God. The difficulties of making Himself known to His comrades were tremendous. He must employ a language which they could well understand. The teaching of the Carpenter is singularly free from technical terms and what might be styled "theological language." There is a very beautiful directness about all the utterances of Christ. It was not merely the fact that His Comrades of that hour were unlearned, but that those who were to become His Comrades through all the coming centuries would need the same simplicity and directness in teaching which He then employed. He made it very apparent that truth could be revealed only to those who are ardently and sincerely seeking it. He also made it clear that in His parables and metaphors and symbols, the very passion of His Soul was to reveal God, and not to conceal Him. Any temporary obscuration resulting from the method of the Carpenter was only with the purpose of a later and a larger illumination. He said: "There is nothing hid which shall not be made manifest." He boldly and unhesitatingly proclaimed Himself as the supreme light of the world. What He said and what He did were only expressions of what He was. What He was, was "God manifest in the flesh." There is much that is mystical and to the natural mind obscure in the Bible, but everything that is essential to the complete unfolding and ultimate perfection of character, is understandable by the average mind. This wonderful Teacher called attention to the fact that a definite intellectual concentration is the

one thing that can ever make revelation real to him who reads it. Hence He says: "He that hath ears to hear, let him hear," and He also says: "Take heed what ye hear." There is so much that is untrue which purports to be true that only a discriminating quest for truth will discover it.

In Shakespeare's description of the poisoning of Hamlet's father, the murderer is represented as pouring the fatal substance into the ear of the victim while he is asleep. People are in danger of being asleep mentally and spiritually, during which period of somnolence the poison of untruth, unbelief, heresy, may be poured into the spiritual ear, with just as deadly effects to the soul as were the contents of the vial to Hamlet's father. It is not unusual for people who have become dissatisfied with their spiritual attainments to seek relief in directions which only aggravate and do not alleviate the difficulty. There is only one antidote for untruth, and that is truth. The only way of assuredly finding the truth is to seek it at its central source. There is no substitute for truth.

We are told that in Jamaica the inhabitants were at one time suffering great injury on account of the destructive work of innumerable armies of ants. They were told relief could be found by importing the "rifle ant," since these ants would destroy completely the insects which were working such havoc. No sooner, however, had the "rifle ants" made way with the common pest, than they in turn began to devour everything in reach. They were more voracious than those that had preceded them. In Scripture language, "the last

state of the people was worse than the first." People whose Christianity has been formal, nominal, and largely a pretence, leaving them with no real soul-satisfaction, but making them simply miserably religious, have often turned to new cults, have adopted untried theories and speculations. But all to no avail. The final result has been that even the remnant of belief which they had has been by this method completely destroyed.

The Christian life is primarily a revelation, then a revolution, then a responsibility and, finally, a law of life and an expression of love. The teachings of the Carpenter were all in the nature of a revelation, through direct instruction and then by Comradeship.

It is interesting to note that in illustrating truth for the benefit of His Comrades, the Carpenter took them to the things with which they were most familiar. He never used human art, or mechanical devices, but directed their thought to the birds, the flowers, the fields, the fruits; to animal life, to nature in some form of its manifestation. His wisdom in this is to be found in the fact that from childhood to old age, people find a marvelous beauty in the parables of Jesus. In one of His charming parables their attention is directed to the ordinary process of seed-sowing, cultivation and harvest. He stressed especially seed-sowing. In interpreting the parable, He tells them that the seed is the Word of God, the soil their own hearts, and that they have a responsibility which cannot be delegated. In His great world-commission the Carpenter made it clear to His comrades that this world cannot be saved

by magic, but by a process as simple as, and very much like, seed-sowing and harvesting. God's Word, perfect though it is, must have a chance to grow. The seed must be selected with care, and the soil must be kindly receptive.

The most wonderful thing which nature unfolds, when we are in true Comradeship with the Carpenter, is the lesson of growth. Jesus called attention to the fact that after a man has sown the seed, he can do absolutely nothing to accomplish its germination, that its growth is entirely independent of human activity; that its flowering and fruitage are through a process entirely beyond the reach of man. It springs up and grows, he knows not how. He is leading them by steady degrees to a recognition of that most mysterious of all things results of which we observe; namely, growth. A seed is one of the most interesting of all objects in nature. Its potencies remain undestroyed through centuries and millenniums. Wheat taken from the mummy-wrappings in Egypt has, under the chemical influences of the soil and the appeal of the sun, revealed the fact that that mysterious force within it was beyond the touch of time. Sunshine and shower can alone call out and up those potential forces in a seed placed there by the Infinite Creator. Germination and growth are God's part, and no effort of ours can in the slightest degree aid it. Growth is the commanding thought with father and mother when a little child comes into the home. Weighing the baby has all the significance of a religious ceremonial. It is an act often repeated.

One of the most vivid recollections of childhood is standing against the door-frame at various intervals to discover the joyous reality of growth. The slightest addition to one's stature during childhood is an occasion for exclamation and satisfaction. Arrested development is one of the saddest of human experiences. How much more important all this is when related to mental growth. When school studies begin, we quickly become interested in the evidences of growth. Marks, supposed to indicate rapidity or tardiness of intellectual unfolding, are watched with even greater interest than were the marks upon the door-frame. At first, we are interested that our marks declare that we have "passed." Later, this is not sufficient. We want to know that we have *surpassed*. Nothing brings more consternation to a student than to find that for the moment he has come to an impasse in any distinct line of study. But there is something greater yet. It is spiritual growth.

The Carpenter took His comrades first to the fields, then to the lilies of the field. Here was growth, resulting in beauty. Brilliancy and loveliness are both characteristic of "the lily of the field." The primary purpose of the lesson seemed to be to prevent the undue agitation and worriment so characteristic of the people of Christ's time, and of every time, incapacitating men and women for the largest service of life. Divine interest in human development is the underlying thought. God cares constantly, cares tremendously, whether or not His children are growing. If growth is the great concern in life, it is important to know its conditions

and its secret. The Carpenter taught that there is a human side to growth which may not be neglected. Each one must provide the proper environment for the seed and then plant the seed itself. God does the rest. The protest was against man undertaking to do what only God can do. The promise was a Divine coöperation guaranteeing the gradual unfolding in sweetness and beauty of any life surrendered to sacred influences. The one environment which is calculated to cause the spiritual seed to germinate and grow is Comradeship with the Carpenter. This and this alone makes possible what we call self-realization.

Right here we find Christ's doctrine of Evolution, which is definitely and distinctly His own. It is simply this, that what God has potentially put in, He supernaturally calls out. Nothing is unfolded that is not first infolded. What is in the seed is not pushed out from within, but is pulled out by influences and forces outside the seed. The seed does not germinate and become the shoot, the stem, and then a reproduction of itself, except through the call of the sunlight and the shower. Neither in the natural or the spiritual world do the germinal powers of the seed find expression, until called out from above. The blade, the ear and the full corn are not pushed up from below. They are pulled up from above. Of course the germ of life is within. Every great development in the vegetable and the animal world represents a careful application of the laws and principles of life and growth. Unaided nature does not at any time or anywhere improve on the past. Nothing in God's universe surpasses itself by virtue of

anything naturally inherent. The farmer has faith in the fertility of the soil and the effect of the sunshine and showers. He selects the seed and by selection secures improvement. Spiritually we must have faith in the fertility of the soil, in the drawing power of the Holy Spirit, to bring to beauty and fruition God's Word sown in the heart.

The lily of the field, gorgeously arrayed, did not reach its wonderful beauty in a moment of time. No more do we secure immediately a full manifestation of the Christian graces. Those qualities of character most admired are the result of coöperative effort between the Carpenter and His Comrades. The one thing which brings the lily of the field to its beauty, is obedience to the laws of life, health and growth. We lay great emphasis upon the fact of law, in nature. We observe that in the natural world everything that acts, acts lawfully. Everything that moves, moves lawfully. Every chemical compound follows a definite law. Science reveals to us the fact that from the infinitesimal all the way to the immeasurable, there is motion unremitting, and that this motion is definitely according to fixed law. In other words, the great thing about nature is not law, but obedience to law. It is the fact that every seed that fulfils its purpose and reproduces its own kind, does so because implicitly obedient to law. The rhythmic movement of heavenly bodies is due to the implicit obedience with which all material substance fulfils the purpose of its creation. In human life discord and in-harmony are due not to the fact that they are not under law, but to the fact that, being under law, they are not

obedient to the law of their being. When the Carpenter pointed to the lily of the field, He was simply saying that God is concerned for the unfolding of life at its best and its most beautiful, and that this can be accomplished by unfailing obedience to spiritual law.

Here, however, is the great difficulty. How can this obedience be assured? Something is woefully wrong with human nature. Man does not grow as he should in loveliness, attractiveness, Godlikeness. Not only can we not expect perfection in a moment of time, but we cannot expect it at all, without complete conformity to the will and power of God. The insignificant becomes the immense, the imperfect becomes the perfect, through a process of constant appropriations of divine power, through contact. It is close Comradeship with the Risen Christ today that insures the development of a character like His. We become unreasonably impatient because our growth is not more rapid. Our concern need not be the rapidity of our growth but a relationship with God so close that He can do the growing in and for us. It is ours to be saturated with truth as God has presented it in His Word, and then to exercise due diligence in our effort to express the Christian graces. The rest we must leave to Him. It is so ordered that we can work out our salvation if we have permitted God to work it in, through a sympathetic concern and a loving devotion to those who come within the reach of our influence. We need not think for a moment, however, that our energetic engagements and enthusiastic activities in what we call service, will do the work for us. It positively will not. It is only in

the closest fellowship with Christ, in quiet meditation and worshipful devotion, together with the purposeful activity of a truly Christian sort, that we will ever know the joy of real Companionship with the Carpenter-Christ. Such a fellowship raises the temperature in which the seeds of truth may develop. Radiating righteousness is the great business of the disciples of Jesus. It is just because of the gradualness of Christian growth that we can keep our courage, believing, with the great Apostle, that though we have not fully attained and are not yet perfect, we can grow up until we know something "of the measure of the fulness of the stature of Christ." The full corn in the ear may seem to us a long way off, but if there is growth, even though slow, which looks toward a final perfection, we can be content. It is ours to entertain the confident belief that He who has begun His good work in us will carry it on unto perfection. To live with Christ among the lilies, to walk with Him among the flowers of the field, to watch with Him the falling sparrow, to think with Him of the eternal realities which underlie the visible, and which proclaim unfailingly the goodness and greatness of God, is sure to result in a spiritual unfolding which will win eternally God's "well done."

Nature fairly overflows with God. The habit of interpreting the messages written on the petal of a flower, the wing of the butterfly, the leaf of the tree; the habit of translating the songs of the birds and the hum of insects or the rumble of thunder will greatly enrich life. It will impress us with the nearness of the Great Companion. It will awaken a desire for efflorescence and

songfulness in our own lives. Nature is a wonderful book. To study it devoutly increases its glory a thousand fold. Walking with Christ among the lilies is the highest of all privileges and will make clear to us the secret, the blessedness and the soul satisfactions of soul growth.

VI

THE TRUTH QUEST

THEN SPAKE THE CARPENTER: "He that doeth the truth cometh to the light."—JOHN 3:21.

IF THE truth quest were as earnest as the youth quest, all the world would be wise. The truth passion was the supreme passion of the Carpenter. He was the embodiment of truth so completely that He could say as no one else could say who has ever lived: "I am the truth." It stood in His thought for the ultimate reality of all things. The great question of the ages has been Pilate's question, asked by him in sarcasm but by all the world in seriousness, "What is truth?" It is the question of philosophy, seeking to solve the problem of existence. It is the question of science, seeking to solve the relations of things. It is preëminently the question, in seeking to solve the mystery of duty and destiny. Interrogation and investigation are as natural to the human mind as are hunger and thirst to the body. Every necessity of life commands and commends inquiry. We are constituted with physical appetites for food and mental and spiritual appetites for knowledge. The neglect of the natural appetite will diminish and destroy us. The neglect of our spiritual appetites in the nature of intellectual and spiritual aspirations will diminish and destroy them. Food hath no value except

as it is appropriated and assimilated. Not repression nor depression should characterize our attitude toward our appetites, but direction. The Carpenter encouraged the spirit of inquiry. So should His comrades. He did not sympathize with critical curiosity but He constantly led out and on in the quest for truth. Study for entertainment's sake is one thing, and study for purposes of intellectual and spiritual growth is quite another. The accumulation of facts does not always result in wisdom. Entertainment is not edification. The edifying influence of truth depends much upon the objects in view.

The innate desire to know is practically universal, and of immeasurable benefit. A little child is a bundle of interrogation points. The wisdom of a child's inquiry is vastly beyond the wisdom of parental knowledge. You wonder what could have ever suggested some of the questions which children ask. When we cease to ask questions, it is because we are more willing to be ignorant than to seem ignorant. We are obliged to confess ignorance by our inquiries for the sake of becoming wise. Most people are hindered from intellectual attainment by pride. Truth has to be wooed in order to be won. It will not respond to any mental coquetry. It does not offer itself to superficial or indifferent thinkers. Knowledge is expensive. No matter what university you attend, you have to pay a tuition. You do not always pay in dollars, but you pay. In the great university of life tuition comes high. It is after a multitude of mistakes and many confessions that we learn how to gain and use intellectual power.

The widening horizon of our day increases the range of learning, but multiplies the strain on mind and heart. Fortunately, however, facilities increase with the increased demand for acquaintance with a multitude of subjects. Knowledge costs in actual work, in concentration, but more especially in its humiliating confessions of ignorance, as we pursue our quest for truth.

The difficulties of education are by no means small, but the difficulties of spiritual wisdom are vastly greater. It is much easier to confess ignorance intellectually than to acknowledge our lack of wisdom in ethical and spiritual matters. The Carpenter's words are a striking rebuke to the agnostic. "He that doeth the truth cometh to the light;" therefore, if we do not have the truth, it is because we have not done the truth. The logic of it is inescapable. Deceptive appearances add to the difficulties of spiritual knowledge. In the spiritual realm, things cannot be taken at their face value. Questions of motive, purpose, program, introduce a multitude of factors which make judicial sentences difficult.

On the western plains we have often looked out on what appeared to be an open sea. We could hardly make ourselves believe that we had not come to a large open lake. Mountains seemed to stretch upward in the distance. Villas appeared to have been builded along the banks of this lovely body of water. Islands stood out here and there like beautiful jewels on the bosom of a bride. The scene was beautiful beyond description. While we looked, it has rolled itself up like a scroll and disappeared. It was a mirage. In like manner, there

are many spiritual propositions, religious sentiments, and doctrinal structures which seem wonderfully attractive. When we know them more thoroughly they prove to be the vapor of disordered imaginations; the fancies of speculative minds; the delusions of dreamers. Because much spiritual truth does not lend itself to description and definition, we foolishly think it not the truth at all. The impalpable ether is filled with forces which, though invisible, are among the mightiest potencies of earth. Because a thing is intangible, does not lessen its reality. Because of the elusiveness of spiritual truth, many people decline to believe that spiritual knowledge, such as pertains to the natural world, is possible. But it is. "The things which are seen are temporal, the things which are not seen are eternal." We have to learn to get in, under and behind the visible and the tangible to discover the permanencies, the changeless realities, which are of real worth in the world.

We have not yet, however, touched upon the greatest hindrance to spiritual knowledge. It is to be found in the stern requisite stated by the Carpenter. "He that *doeth* the truth cometh to the light." In ethical and spiritual relations, we only know what we actually practise. Experience is equivalent to demonstration. It is the practise of the presence of God which enables us to know Him. Comradeship with the Carpenter is nothing less than the practise of the presence of God. It is the practise of prayer, or the doing of prayer, which puts us in possession of the great truth that humanity is linked up with Divinity, and that God can work through natural causes and gain supernatural results.

It is the practise of virtue, or doing virtuously, which acquaints us with the reality and the splendor of virtue itself. It is doing the moral law which unfolds its loveliness to us. It is doing the beatitudes that gives value to the deliverances of the Carpenter upon the Mount. Any theoretical understanding of the truth of religion falls short of being in us and to us a power for righteousness. It is much easier to think about religion than to be religious. Dissertation is much easier than doing. When, as is usually the case, a love for the merely pleasurable reaches the proportion of a passion, it is easier to let the higher truths alone than to discover them by practise. The high rate of tuition in gaining spiritual knowledge leads to its neglect. The reason why truth lingers so long in the shadows and remains neglected is because humanity hesitates to do the truth.

Spiritual truth is spiritually discerned because spiritually practised. An honest pursuit for knowledge is possible only to spiritual minds. A sordid materialism acts upon the spiritual vision exactly as a cataract acts upon the natural vision. The natural man has very little spiritual truth simply because he will not engage in the pursuit of spiritual knowledge by doing spiritual things. The Bible itself may be diligently studied yet neither understood nor assimilated. We are hindered by our unwillingness to practise the truth we do know and hence fail to acquire the larger truth which might be ours were we willing to pay the price. Until we are ready to say: "I will walk confidently in the light of larger knowledge wherever and whenever it presents

itself to me," we shall not make much headway in our truth quest. A determination to do the truth, then, must be as final as our passion to know the truth. Prejudice perverts knowledge. Bigotry blinds. The high pursuit of spiritual knowledge requires a fair mind and a free field.

We are endowed with a religious faculty. The mind working in certain directions is called a faculty. For example, one cannot enjoy music if the musical faculty has been entirely neglected. No more can you enjoy art unless the art faculty has been developed, giving appreciation of form and color. We have a religious faculty which enables us to lay hold of and make use of religious truths, but this faculty may atrophy, exactly as any other faculty may die from disuse. You may reach a clear conclusion that an Infinite Being must be and is, and yet have no comforting, strengthening knowledge of God. Active employment strengthens any faculty. Drift away from the sanctions of the Church; ignore God's Book and trample upon His day; and your religious faculty becomes either atrophied or petrified. The tree in the forest covered over with lava sometimes turns to stone. The religious element in personality covered with accumulations of worldliness or even of abstract intellectualism will just as surely turn to stone. The reverse is true. By doing the truth the religious faculty is nourished, exercised, made vigorous, fulfils its mission, lifts us to the heights.

Sympathy and charity were enjoyed by the Carpenter in the pursuit of spiritual knowledge. Proclivities, aptitudes and abilities differ in different people. View-

point vitally affects an individual in his search for truth. The governing purposes of life lead to conclusions widely different in various individuals. There is a wide diversity of opinion regarding much which we call religion. People equally honest do not interpret the Word of God the same way in all particulars. This accounts for denominational differences. When the unimportant is magnified, the things fundamentally important are likely to be neglected. No one denomination has all of the truth or the best method. For these reasons, it becomes increasingly important to keep in closest touch with Jesus Christ as our great Leader and Teacher. It is not our business to require that every one should see things exactly as we see them. Not every shrub and flower in God's Eden of revelation will appear just the same to everybody, nor is it necessary that there should be this absolute uniformity of thought. Probably no fruit has exactly the same flavor in every mouth. This practise of sympathy and charity does not for a moment do away with the fact that truth is truth, and that great principles are abiding and unchanging. Even though the flavor of a fruit may differ, the fact of the fruit remains. Unless the taste is entirely abnormal, the distinction between sweet and sour should appear to all. The eye which is not entirely defective recognizes the distinction between the beautiful and that which is ugly. In spiritual things, though the Comrades of the Carpenter may differ widely, yet on the important question of the great work of the Carpenter-Christ, and His matchless character, there should be no difference. Substantials and funda-

mentals in spiritual things are not difficult to discover to those who do the truth. While insisting without compromise upon the greatest of all truths, salvation through sacrifice, we should cover with a mantle of charity the erroneous positions of our fellow-men. A strong faith can afford to be tolerant. A marked feature of the life of Christ was its tolerance. He knew nothing of "liberalism" which has as its only dimension, latitude. He was too great for that. In charity and in tolerance no one has ever surpassed the Carpenter. The most vigorous thinkers, people with uncompromising convictions, have usually manifested both tolerance and sympathy for those who differ from them in religious matters. Nothing develops charity and sympathy like the practise of truth. Its very difficulty engenders kindness, toleration, consideration.

The rewards of a sincere pursuit of spiritual knowledge are beyond estimate. The Carpenter said: "Who-soever cometh unto me, I will in no wise cast out." It is only another way of saying that the search for God which is honest and persistent will never go unrewarded. Refreshing, invigorating, convincing Revelation is one of the most satisfying rewards in the honest quest for spiritual knowledge. Another of the rewards is the sense of liberty which comes from a conscious possession of the truth. We are like explorers in a new country, rich in the variety of its flora and fauna, its mineral wealth and its magnificent scenery. Whoever becomes a Comrade of the Carpenter is greeted over and over again with delightful surprises from unexpected quarters. Spiritual truth never becomes com-

monplace, and never becomes obsolete. It is adapted to all times and to all conditions. This is why the truths taught by the Carpenter become to His comrades an inexhaustible mine of wealth. No honest seeker for truth can possibly neglect that great inexorable fact in the world, the Bible. It is a Book with which men have to reckon, whether they would or not. The commanding thing about the Bible is its portraiture of the Carpenter of Nazareth, unique, commanding, striking, sublime. From Him have issued the influences most contributive to the happiness, the healthfulness and the holiness of mankind. The surging spiritual influences radiated from the personality of Jesus Christ never lessens, and never becomes less potent in power to purify and to exalt humanity.

In our quest for truth, we soon discover that we get new truth from old teachers, and old truth from new teachers. New communications of truth are usually old truth in a new dress. Every now and then some individual or group of individuals proposes to guide the world to a fuller knowledge of God by some new method. Often this proposition is accompanied by reflections upon old methods and old-time doctrines. It does not take long, however, to discover that wherever a truth is to be found under a new name, it is as old as eternity; and usually in some period of the world's history the same sentiments in almost the same phraseology have already been offered to the world.

The greatest of all truth is undoubtedly what the Carpenter designated as "saving truth." There can be no richer reward for a painstaking effort to know the

truth through the practise of truth than we find in the exhilarating freedom experienced when salvation through sacrifice becomes a reality in life. The difficulties of life are lessened, the delights are increased, the trials of life are successfully defied, the triumphs of life are greatly multiplied, when with a conviction, born of discovery, we can say: "I know that my redeemer liveth." The first great business of the Church is to lead the world to a knowledge of saving truth. The second great business of the Church is building character through truth. It is tremendously important to be sure that we have the plan of the great Architect, and it is equally important to know that we have adopted it, in our building processes. We have learned much when we have learned the sources of power. The ideals of life presented in the Gospels are very beautiful, but very exacting. The Comrades of the Carpenter are always conscious that in Him they have the perfect ideal. To become like Him must become the supreme purpose of life. Comradeship with Christ leads us at last to the possession of wealth which neither diminishes nor dims. It is infinitely greater to live in the thought world with the Carpenter than to live in the world of things with unbelievers.

The greatest of all truth is that which has to do with the Life Everlasting. Who can give us the sure word and the final word here? Threescore years and ten, or a little more at the longest, and we are through with the things with which we have to do here. What then? No one has ever appeared on the earth who gave any real evidence of the truth relating to the life after

death save Jesus of Nazareth. He talked with perfect familiarity of the things beyond the ken of human understanding. He talked convincingly.

Eternity is a tremendous word. Its meaning none can fathom. The mind is staggered by the thought of endlessness. Any truth respecting the endless life should be a matter of the profoundest concern. Here, if anywhere, we can only rest in certainties. Happy guesses do not interest us. Speculation brings no peace. We want to know what is to be the soul's experience in the endless life. None but the Carpenter ever even pretended to be able to speak assuringly about eternity. It is not a matter of importance to truth who accepts or rejects truth. It is what it is, despite doubts, denials or hearty acceptance. It cannot be slain. It asks no favors and declines all compromises. It bears the seal of the Eternal. It cannot be laughed out of court. It is as resistless as the tides and constant as God. It is unmoved by threats or tears. It is dignified but never distant. Its doors are closed, but the key hangs within the reach of every interested inquirer. Its power and beauty can only be appreciated when it is received. Its castles do not yield to bombardment but gate and portcullis respond to the touch of a child. It comforts, consoles, counsels, admonishes, commands and inspires, and finally crowns. To His comrades Jesus Christ offers to unfold all secrets necessary for peace and comfort and character construction. He is the Truth. Nothing is truth that contradicts His life or His teaching. Walk with Him here, and you will enjoy fellowship with Him forever and ever.

VII

CELESTIAL REGISTRY

THEN SPAKE THE CARPENTER: "Notwithstanding, in this rejoice not that the spirits are subject unto you, but rejoice rather because your names are written in heaven.""—LUKE 10:20.

THIS reverses the appeal often heard today: "Pay no attention to Heaven, concern yourself only with the duties of today." The truth is, he concerns himself most about the duties of today who has in mind the conditions of eternal fellowship with God. Elation over self-achievement is as natural as breathing. It readily leads to the presumptive attitude of entire self-sufficiency. Man is not naturally humble. Pride is a predominant characteristic. "Is not this great Babylon that I have builded?" This was the attitude of a man who was riding swiftly to a fall. The Carpenter taught that every man rides to a fall who is engrossed in the glory of his own achievements. The campaign of the Seventy had just ended. They were comrades of the Carpenter appointed by Him to make once and for all this declaration to the world, that Comradeship with the Carpenter means the exercise of a power like His and the living of a life like His. The things He had done, they were to do. This was to prove forever that Christ is communicable. They did it. It worked. With a glad surprise and a sense of the glory of

achievement, the comrades returned to the Carpenter. The success which attended their efforts was so great that it produced auto-intoxication. They found themselves in possession of powers super-normal and supernatural. They had been sent forth under explicit directions. They were not left in doubt. Human need of any kind was not to claim their attention. The chief feature, however, of the Great Commission was this, the promise of continued comradeship. This comradeship meant an abiding power, through an abiding Presence. The sick were healed; incarnate evil fled at their approach; the discouraged and overwhelmed were filled with cheer; joy flowed like a river wherever they went; the trophies of their victories were both material and spiritual. Thus, at the very beginning, the Carpenter taught that there is no interest of humanity that is not to be the concern of the Church of Christ. Their exultation was unbounded. Intense enthusiasm was dominant. Unrestrained joy burst from their hearts in an exultant utterance: "Lord, even the devils are subject unto us through thy name!" The great Leader saw the perils of success. A hundred can stand failure where one can stand success. He recognized the inevitable disaster which would follow mistaken zeal. He saw that the successful manipulation of supernatural energy might easily produce an emotional vanity. They were glorying in the mere fact of achievement for achievement's sake. The fact of extraordinary manifestation of power was uppermost in their hearts.

It is the moment for warning. It is given. Spiritual fervor must have as its objective Divine glory and

human beatitude. The Carpenter promises His comrades ever-increasing power; assures them that they will be impervious to attacks of evil; promises that the serpents of this world and venomous scorpions from the realm of darkness which lurk in unregenerate human nature will be powerless in their efforts to destroy them. What they had done was only an earnest of what the Comrades of the Carpenter were to do through all the ages. "Greater things." This is the cheering promise never cancelled, never abrogated, always fulfilled. Watch the comrades now. You can see the sparkle of the eye, the brightness of countenance, the erectness of form, the sense of self-superiority, together with eagerness of outlook. It is at this juncture the Carpenter interjects His word of caution, rebuke and admonition. "Notwithstanding, in this rejoice not that the spirits are subject unto you, but rejoice because your names are written in Heaven." It is as though He said: "You have been successful, as I knew you would be, in the humanitarian work that has claimed your attention; men have watched you and marveled; you have startled and surprised entire communities; you have awakened sincere inquiry for truth; you have gained worldly applause; you have become conspicuous; you have had abundant evidence that you have received and used power divinely imparted to you. Beware! You are beginning to delight in power and popularity. Love for yourselves is taking the place of loyalty to God. Victory for its own sake is nothing. Victory for the Father's sake and humanity's sake is everything. There is one thing immeasurably better than any spec-

tacular demonstration of power. My own indwelling in your hearts, and the resultant growth of the Christian graces is immeasurably important. Let your glorying be in the fact that God Almighty has accepted you through Me. Rejoice that your names are written in Heaven."

The supreme question, then, is the question of Divine registry as an indication of Divine relationship. Not the Hall of Fame represents the greatest wisdom or the greatest work. No human scroll furnishes evidence of true eminence. Blessedness and felicity through time and eternity have in them no selfishness. They only mark the greater ability to contribute blessing.

The striking and the spectacular are always interfering with the profound and the permanently real. A passion for notoriety, for reputation, for applause is apparent oftentimes even among Comrades of the Carpenter. Sometimes personal ambition does not go beyond the household, or again is limited by the social relations of the community. The more ambitious are satisfied only with nation-wide or world-wide notoriety. It is indeed human to be elated by conspicuous success. If permitted to go unchecked, ambition of a selfish sort becomes a dominating power, leading to the sacrifice of principle and the paralysis of piety. Political power often turns the heads of men; social recognition not infrequently unbalances the mind, breaks up friendships, develops haughtiness, destroys influence. Nothing is more sacred than personal power, and nothing is more perilous than its employment for unworthy ends. We dare not be too much occupied, in our thinking, with

that which is merely transactional. When we emphasize doing more than being, we are likely to become self-centered.

Peter walking the wave was a fine demonstration of the exercise of a contributed power, until he began to glory in the achievement. Then he began sinking. With his eye on the Carpenter, he was successful. While he recognized the mysterious blessing of true Comradeship, he was a success. Rejoicing in his own abilities, he became quickly a failure. Successes for their own sake bring no happiness. Successes as a means to the production of holiness and happiness are like Jacob's ladder, and angels of God descend and ascend upon them. The Carpenter had to contend with a bold, bald materialism, rampant in His day much as it is in our own. We live in a time when a new emphasis is given to the transactional rather than to the conditional. The loaves and the fishes are important, but not supremely important. When they are given undue recognition, Christianity declines. The Carpenter never taught the neglect of the tabernacle of flesh, but He perpetually taught that it was only a tabernacle, and that there was something more sacred still at the Inner Shrine. Alleviating the conditions of the poor, securing better housing, better feeding, better sanitary conditions is a part, but only a subordinate part, of Christianity. Philanthropy itself may become spectacular and demonstrative to the almost total neglect of the spiritual and eternal. Organization and entertainment have the call today. Once more the Carpenter speaks to His Church: "Minister to the needs of the

bodies and minds of men; rejoice, if you will, in the larger efficiency through organization, to lessen the ills of humanity, but remember that human nature is never changed by externalities; remember also that the supreme need in this world is the transformation of individual lives by regeneration, which will enable them to live on a higher level, physically, ethically, spiritually. Rejoice in your celestial registration." By this is meant no mere self-satisfaction in being saved, but a realization that only through divine approbation can the greater tasks of life be efficiently performed.

It is protested that there may be too complete a satisfaction in the mere fact that one's name is written in Heaven. Not if you understand the real significance of salvation. There is no selfishness in the humility and penitence which secures pardon for the sins of the past, the purposefulness to live on the high plane prescribed by the Carpenter for his comrades in the future. To have one's name written in Heaven means simply a perpetual approval by God Almighty. The supremest cause for human happiness lies ever in the consciousness that we are under the smile of God. We are the trustees of divinely given wealth. At the conclusion of a term of service, the accounts of a treasurer are audited. If correct, a word, "Approved," signifies the faithfulness of the trustee of public treasure. Embezzlements, forgeries, counterfeits, these prevent having the name written in the record, "Approved." The name written in Heaven, as Jesus presented it, signifies loyalty to duty, enthusiasm in service, and full obedience to the Divine command.

As a voter you go to record your conviction in the selection of men for office. The election clerk, however, scans the roll for your name, and it is not there. He finds that you are of alien birth. You have not been naturalized. He tells you you are not an American citizen. You answer: "Very true, but I concluded to take my chances with the rest." He answers: "There are no chances. Conditions are explicit; obligations are absolute; you have not fulfilled the conditions, your name is not in the registry; you have no vote." This is quite as reasonable as to ignore the explicit directions whereby we become "naturalized" through regeneration, and thus qualified for permanent Comradeship with the Carpenter-Christ. Celestial registration demands repentance, the acceptance of the Carpenter-Christ as Saviour, Intercessor and Advocate, which results in Comradeship and hence in enrolment in the register of Heaven. Righteousness, heart purity, Christlikeness, result from trust in, and companionship with, Jesus Christ.

One of the great ocean liners is preparing to start on its transatlantic voyage. The decks are crowded, and just as the ship is to put out to sea a man approaches the purser, and demands a room. "Your name, sir?" It is given. "You are not registered. There is no place for you." "Yes, but I have secretly entertained the purpose of making this trip for a long time." "Your secret avowal is of no significance. Your mental intention has not sufficed. You have not fulfilled the conditions of registration. There is no place for you." It is not enough to entertain the foolish thought

that you can take your chance on the next life. There are no chances to take. "With the heart, man believeth unto righteousness; with the mouth, confession is made unto salvation."

No greater mistake could be made than to assume that Christianity anywhere or in any way endorses selfishness or self-seeking. The concern for right relations with God in order to salvation is at the same time a concern for right relations with God in order to service. A service to be effective must have a noble objective. Whoever engages in the sublime task of making a life, rather than making a living, will appreciate the deep meaning of the exhortation of the Carpenter to His Comrades. One of the most cheering facts revealed by Jesus Christ is the fact that the past can never so dominate the future that change will be impossible. Christianity is filled with a boundless hope. A Comrade of the Carpenter invariably has outlook. What has been called, "The Hell of the Irreparable," has no terrors for him. He knows a wide-open future makes possible the correction of the mistakes of yesterday. The past is not altogether irreparable. A very common and commonplace proverb is: "There is no use of crying over spilled milk." Like most proverbs, this has its foundation and origin in a Bible utterance. We find it in a parable Joab spoke to King David. Among other things, he said: "Concerning Absalom: All have to die. Why lament over the death of Absalom? He must die some time, and at any rate it can't be helped." Then this metaphor was used: "The past is as water spilled on the ground, which cannot be

gathered up again." It is useless to worry over spilled water. This contains only a partial truth. It is never commendatory in an individual to utterly ignore the past. There is, indeed, much use in lamenting over both the irreparable and the reparable past. They teach us to avoid a repetition of the mistake. Sensitive consciences may readily become too morbid over a past which is beyond control. On the other hand, the edge of conscience may be completely dulled, and the great lessons already taught be lost.

Life consists largely of cutting channels through which thoughts, feelings, desires, deeds of every nature may pour. The full expression of personal life must ever be under the guidance of a wisdom supernatural, and under the impulse of a power supernatural. The only way this is ever made possible is through intimate association with God. It was for this great purpose the Carpenter came, expressing to the utmost degree who God is, and what He is willing to be to those aspiring to the best which life affords.

We are carving a character. At any period of life, we are like the sculptor who has been working on marble. At successive periods the chips are all swept out of the workroom, but the statue remains. We are not through with the past. We never will be through with it. Whatever can be corrected should be corrected. That which is beyond our reach must be taken confidently to the great Comrade, with the request that the mantle of His mercy shall cover it. There is no mistaking the fact that the surest guarantee of terrestrial progress is celestial registration. Every man needs

coöperation with God. No one is of himself sufficient to realize his own best ideals until in Comradeship with the Carpenter. The Church today must "watch her step," or she will be guilty of such absorption in temporalities, in program-making, in the artificial and the transient, that she will forget that the ultimate objective in the Christian religion is spiritual transformation and perfection. The tremendous success of our great missionary enterprises has been due in the past to the deep spirituality that has characterized the Comrades of the Carpenter in fulfilling the Great Commission. No one would decry the advantages and importance of education for belated and benighted races. No one should disparage the effort to bring about better conditions of living. Nevertheless, let us remember that the inhabitants of pagan lands may become sufficiently civilized to engage in the practises and enjoy the privileges of a material Christian culture, and yet be lost. The concern of the missionary must be, if he is faithful to his commission, that those who come under his influence shall have "their names written in Heaven." This is precisely the thing which in many circles is decried and denied. It is true, nevertheless, and deserves peculiar emphasis in this materialistic age.

VIII

THE LIGHT OF THE WORLD

THEN SPAKE THE CARPENTER: "I am the light of the world." "Ye are the light of the world."—JOHN 8:12; MATTHEW 5:14.

LIGHT is the symbol of all that is desirable. It is almost synonymous with life. It represents to the mind cheerfulness, safety, happiness. Darkness stands in our thinking for the cold, the cheerless, the difficult, the dangerous. We shrink from the unlighted. We employ every device to prevent the "unfruitful works of darkness," by lighting our streets at night. The pioneer often builded fires, and kept them blazing through the night, to ward off the beasts of prey. Light represents mental illumination, hence wisdom. Light guides our footsteps and prevents stumbling. At divided roadways lights are placed to direct the traveler. Only the lighted way is the safe way. Beacon lights warn the mariner of danger, or invite him to a safe harbor. Light means life at its brightest and best. The imagery employed by Jesus to declare His relation to life and truth, and then to describe the marvelousness of Comradeship, could not more forcefully have revealed the illustriousness of His own life or the splendor of a life whose main characteristic is Comradeship with Himself.

In the great quadrangle, just outside the Temple, there were brought, on the occasion of the Feast of Tabernacles, two tables upon which were placed two large candelabra. Their immense lights could be seen far out over the city. They were designed to represent the pillar of fire which guided the children of Israel during their wilderness wanderings on their way to the promised land. In nothing had the goodness of God and the Divine majesty manifested itself more than in the wonderful pillar of fire. It declared the presence of the Infinite and also His unfailing interest in their progress. The utterance of Christ must have been wonderfully striking, with the bright lights shining as He spoke, when He said: "I am the light of the world." The Carpenter's proclamation was a startling claim to distinction.

The autumnal period of His ministry had been reached. The time had come for the fullest revealing of the nature of His mission and also for a declaration of Himself, in the utmost sublimity of His personality. In the springtime period of Christ's teaching He said little about Himself. He demonstrated, but did not declare. He worked miracles, and thus said: God is here, among you. He let them draw their own inferences regarding His Divineness. Springtime is the time of gaiety and gladness. Every cascade is singing its song of jubilee. Every opening bud is a promise of bloom and beauty. The autumn is different. It is serious. It speaks of culminations and the fulfilment of promise. The forests are royally appareled. It is the harvest time. Strength and richness combine. The

utterance of autumn is sonorous, deep, grand. In the teaching of Jesus a pictorial vividness characterizes the closing period of His matchless life. Metaphor and symbol grow majestic. The arrows of thought fly more swiftly, and pierce more deeply. Every day now is a triumphal march toward Calvary. Every conflict issues in victory looking to that last great victory over death itself. All the sayings of the Carpenter are weighted with the wisdom of God. His latter-day utterances lead us into the Holy of Holies of His life and love. As the time drew near for His physical departure He seemed to be especially tender and concerned for His Comrades, then with Him, who should come into that sacred relationship in following years. He drew them close to Him, as a hen gathers her chickens under her wings when she sees a hawk approaching. The little company of Comrades contributed to Him something His great heart craved. You cannot read sympathetically the life of the Carpenter without discovering His yearning for companionship.

We might almost say that the happiness of God is not complete without fellowship with mankind, for what did He not do to show His own yearning for the love and Comradeship of His children by creation? The Carpenter took every consistent means to increase and intensify the devotion of His followers for Himself. He does the same today. The Divine craving for comradeship never lessens. In every successive representation of Himself as the fulfillment of Messianic hope, Christ more distinctly portrayed the office of the Messiah as life-giving. He saw the hopelessness of

His task in dealing with those whose prejudices were so intense that they would distort all He said. But He knew His Comrades were coming to understand Him more and more perfectly. In the symbols employed by Christ we find truth portrayed in such a way that all people of all ages can understand Him. He was the universal Man. This explains the up-to-dateness of the teachings of Jesus. There is no especial interest in historic fact, unless it is pertinent to the problems of our own day.

With a sweep as wide as the universe, with trumpet tones destined to resound through the ages He had already proclaimed Himself the "Bread of Life," the "Water of Life," and now with unprecedented earnestness He calls Himself "The Light of the World." As the sun is the center of the solar system, so He claims to be the center of every true philosophy of life and every true religious system of life. There is no mistaking that Christ intended to represent Himself as being unique. Yes, but vastly more than that word signifies. Transcendently great! The incomparable One! The Way! The only way to life and blessedness. The Truth! Yes, the personification of *all truth*. Every political, social, philosophical and religious system that is not Christocentric is wrong. It is contrary to the clearest conditions of progressive achievement. As the earth is dependent on the sun for its beauty and its fruitage, so in the moral and spiritual world the Sun of Righteousness contributes all.

Light is the symbol of perfect holiness. A light beam is the purest of all pure things. The Psalmist ecstat-

ically cries: "The Lord God is a sun." Again: "Who coverest thyself with light, as with a garment." In saying, "I am the light of the world," the Nazareth Carpenter declared what no sage or poet or prophet who had ever lived would have dared to say. What would more quickly have repudiated any sort of claim to recognition, on the part of Moses or David or Isaiah or Elijah, than such a statement as this? Think for a moment of what would happen to any modern teacher who would say to an assembled audience: "I am the light of the world." He would be hissed from the platform. Not so with Jesus Christ. In view of His life, there is nothing incongruous about it.

Light is the symbol of health. Sin is disease. Law is the condition of health, and sin is violation of the law. Violate the conditions of health, and disease is sure. We are physically dependent on the sunlight. Light is the great enemy to disease germs and the great friend of health. Comradeship with the Carpenter has exactly the same effect on the soul that a sun-bath has on the body. It gives everything that we call health. It is one of the characteristics of evil that it conceals its own deadly nature until it has undermined moral health. One of our philosophers defined life as "the sum of the forces that resist death." Whenever the death forces gain the ascendent, it is all over. Of such a man we say, even while he is among us: "He is a dead man." Light sends its healing power, kills the death germs, and the life forces gain the ascendent. All this has its counterpart in the spiritual realm.

Light, again, is the symbol of wisdom. We say of an educated man: "He is enlightened." Christ is the source of highest wisdom. Nothing was more striking than the way in which the disciples of Jesus became educated by association with Him. He was their instructor by precept and example. They surpassed a hundred fold the educated and cultivated men of their day in spiritual insight, in everything that is called wisdom. All the accumulated knowledge of the ages amounts to nothing, if it does not help men to know God and duty and destiny. As the Light of the World, Jesus illuminates the understanding spiritually and makes clear what would otherwise remain forever inaccessible and unaccountable.

Light is also a symbol of power. The pulling power of the sun is seen every springtime. It has power to awaken life in every seed. It lifts the juices to the treetops and clothes them with living green. It smites the frozen clod and prepares it for the seed sowing. It leaps to the top of the ice castle and brings it down humbly to the ocean. Light has greater dynamic force than lightning. The sun, and not the detonating thunder, speaks most eloquently of power. Who can explain the power or influence exercised by men devoid of special mental training of the schools or the influence of social culture? The Galilee fishermen illustrate to the world the possibilities of the highest education and culture through companionship with Him who is the intellectual, the emotional, the spiritual light of the world. As the Light, Christ becomes the one safe guide through the world-mazes so baffling and often so dis-

couraging. The sovereign cure for worry is illumination through association with Christ.

“He that followeth me shall not walk in darkness,” said the Master. These are perilous times. A very babel of directions sounds in the ears of the traveler. Like the approach to an Oriental city where a hundred appealing solicitors are seeking patronage, so are the offers of leadership today. There are many voices but only one Guide. You can feel safe only when under Divine escort. The Carpenter remains the Light of the World today just as when He spake to the Comrades of that morning hour of Christianity. He will leave no one in doubt as to moral duty who will stand in the sunlight of His smile. The lighted life is the confident life, the expectant life, the assured life. Directions are easily determined after sunrise. Uncertainties regarding the Carpenter vanish as you enter into Comradeship. To know Him is to love Him, and to love Him is to walk an illuminated highway. The most beautiful lace is made in a dark room where there is clear white light concentrated on the pattern. These rays of light are indispensable. Even though there are still some perplexities, if we have the light of the Sun of Righteousness directly on the pattern, we may be content and pursue our work with assurance that something beautiful and fully approved will result. The lighted life is the constructive life and the comprehensive life. There is a disposition to refer to the Christian life as creed-bound and grooved. Nothing could be farther from the truth. Viewing a landscape in the moonlight is utterly different from looking out upon it in the broad

sunlight. The wider view and the more satisfying view of all truth is where the sunlight of the personality of Jesus shines upon it. The life of breadth and beauty comes from walking with the Great Companion up the steeps of life, illuminated by His presence.

The complemental truth was forcefully uttered by Christ. "Ye are the light of the world." What greater compliment could have been paid to His Comrades of that time and all time? Here, then, is the opportunity for the life illustrious. No life need be insignificant and unworthy after such an assurance. It was a declaration that every child of humanity has a chance to become illustrious in the eyes of God. How few there are who can ever hope for anything like fame, here! Not one in ten thousand can receive the plaudits of men and be called great. But that need dishearten no one. There is something greater. You can shine as the stars forever and ever. "Ye are the light of the world." It was to Comrades the Carpenter spake those cheering words. It is to the Comrades of today, the obligation and responsibility together with the high privilege of shining comes. Again we hear Him say: "Let your light so shine before men that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father who is in Heaven." Here is a conspicuousness that has in it no pride, no conceit, no presumption, no selfishness. We hide away, while yet we shine, just as the lantern carried at night does not reveal itself but the objects about it, so also the shining life. The service of shining is the sublimest of all services. Until we become luminaries we can scarcely claim to be Christian. The greatest need

of humanity is illumination. Let the light shine, and truth will easily be discovered. The history of world progress is the history of illuminated highways. Only the light can make the road safe.

When Gertrude Ederle was nearing shore after swimming the English channel recently, bonfires and every sort of illumination were employed, that she might know exactly where to land, and the shortest and safest course be taken. How many there are struggling amid the breakers who need the light we can and should give them. A few days ago a great airship, the Los Angeles, after a voyage across the sea, hung over Boston, and tested out radio stations, then proceeded to Lakehurst. The one important thing was a lighted way and a safe landing.

Jesus Christ delegated to His Comrades the task of reflecting His light and thus lighting the way for humanity in its hazardous journeys of life. We are the legatees of a rich history. Our greatest indebtedness is to those who have let their light shine, as civilization has been unfolding. Leadership above all else must be a leadership that lights the way. We need today luminaries who draw their own light from the Central Sun. The world owes nothing to those opaque bodies that might have been luminous, but refused to permit the Sun of Glory to shine upon them.

The secret of seeing and enjoying the bright side of life is worth possessing. We have not far to seek. The bright side of life is the side upon which we shine. How many there are nursing their misfortunes and living ever in a shadowed world! Not even the twilight

zone represents the hazy, murky, dismal atmosphere in which they move. Their song, if ever they sing, is a dirge. No oratorios of praise escape their lips. The light is shining, but they do not reflect it. Their clouds have no silver lining. That is never true of the Comrades of the Carpenter. He shines upon all who intrude nothing between Him and them. Insensibility to the Great Light is the saddest of all conditions. Many of the most learned in worldly wisdom have lost sensitivity to the Sun Supernal. Flowers emit fragrance, but they have no sense of smell. Fruits have their delicious flavors, but they cannot taste.

The bright side is not discovered, it is made. A search for the bright side of life is a vain search. It is as absurd as for a bird to search for the air and the blue sky. You cannot buy it, yet it is within reach. You cannot by searching find it, yet it is yours just by shining. Let God's sunshine into your heart, and you have to shine. It reflects itself. That is exactly what Jesus meant when He said, 'Ye are the light of the world. Let your light shine.' Shine, or shrivel. Shine, or be sorrowful. Shine, or sink. The choice is yours. Your wealth will never make you a luminary. Your social position will never make you a light. Why go from room to room with an unlighted candle, hoping to at last find a room where there is light? Why not light the room you are in?

The sun is always on the bright side of life. When Alexander's horse became uncontrollable in the hands of the groom the great general cried: "Turn his head toward the sun." He did, and the steed was calmed

immediately. He had been affrighted at his own shadow. The cure for timidity is facing the sunshine. Looking Christward relieves the soul of all terror. The cloud-piercing mountain is always bright on the sunward side. The deepest valley is still flower-covered on its sunward side. He who refuses to become a luminary makes a dark spot, with its chill and danger. It is true that heavy clouds hang over many lives. There are business clouds and domestic clouds and social clouds and moral clouds that chill the world. All the more must we let our light shine to overcome the deadly influence of darkness. Light alone can bring good cheer and hopefulness. The Carpenter's Comrades have no right to live lives of gloomy discontent. We of all people have reason to be happy. The warmth of the Comrade Divine should give the heart a tropical beauty in which every kind of flower and shrub and even Heavenly exotics can thrive.

There is no folly greater than the folly of frowning. It kills the light. A scowl on the face is an evidence of a scowl in the heart. Kindness will develop kindness. Shining will result in more sunshine. Smile and others will answer. You cannot get honey from a rock, and you can as little get good cheer from a soul that has not learned the secret of shining. Urbanity of conduct and gentleness of attitude beget health. There is poison in anger. A sound body is impossible for any great length of time where there is an unsound heart.

The light we send forth is a reflected light. If we stand away from the Sun, what chance have we of shining for others? As lights in the world commanding

Christ, the comrade of Christ must have good will for all. He must practice agreeableness, soul-nobility, magnanimity, courtesy, for all these are simply rays of Divine sunshine which come from Jesus Christ direct to the human heart. The light we send forth must be far more than the light of knowledge. Intellectual illumination is a part, but only a part, of our service of shining. It means a whole personality bathed in the sunshine of Divine love until it fairly glows with the Divine. It is a peace-giving, joy-producing thing. It makes the heart magnetic and tremendously increases power of attraction. It is remedial. It heals broken hearts. It is balm that quickly cures wounds made by human cruelty. The Great Light of the World must shine right into our hearts if we in turn are to be of real service to others. Electricity is generated through swift-moving contacts. Only contact with Christ can generate in the human heart electric power of a spiritual nature that can be converted into light. Our light is developed by using what we have.

In the city of Chicago some years ago a little boy stood one day where the sunshine was streaming through the window in such a way that the rainbow colors appeared on some little slippers his mother had just given him. He was radiant with delight. "Look, mama, what is this?" She answered: "That is God's smile, and I hope when you come to be a man you will always stand in God's smile." Years passed. The boy grew to manhood. He acquired large wealth. He builded a palatial home of his own choosing. His mother had passed on. Her possessions had been care-

fully preserved. Now they were to be moved into the new house. He would entrust the work to no one. The first object that arrested his attention as he opened the trunk containing his mother's special treasures was the little slippers he had worn when his mother had told him the prismatic colors upon his feet were God's smile. In her own handwriting she had penned a little story of the incident and had concluded with: "I am afraid my William has gotten far away from God's smile. God grant he may return again, and stand in the smile of redeeming love in the Sun of Righteousness." He stopped reading, faced himself seriously, and said: "Yes; far, far from God's smile. But here and now I return, and will seek the sunshine of His love, until again the prismatic colors reflect themselves in my life." He turned over his business to his associates. He began at once to let his light shine on other pathways, and used his great wealth to bring happiness and health and hope into the lives of his fellow-men. He became a Comrade with the Carpenter, and radiated Christ's love wherever he went.

Shine, until all of life shall become one splendid manifestation of Divine Glory. Get under God's smile. Breathe in it; bathe in it; live in it.

IX

THE CARPENTER, THE GOOD SHEPHERD

THEN SPAKE THE CARPENTER: "I am the good shepherd: the good shepherd layeth down his life for the sheep."—JOHN 10:11.

FOR striking symbolism, beautiful imagery, sublime simplicity, no discourse by any one in any language is comparable to the Carpenter's discourse to His Comrades on the "Good Shepherd." No modern preacher, if he could, would dare to go before his congregation with such a simple statement of truth. Only the great can be simple in expression and at the same time have length and breadth and depth in their utterances. We think of a learned discourse as one that proceeds on the sesquipedalian plane, with technical language and high-sounding phrases. It must enter the domain of metaphysics and deal liberally in "the psychology of the group" and "resident forces." It must quote frequently from Aristotle, Plato, Socrates, Ovid, Sophocles, Virgil, Tacitus, and then come on to the patristic fathers and the School-men and Reformers, with a sufficient flavor of technical scientific terms to give the appearance of wide reading and deep thinking. If he does these and kindred other similar things to conceal his ignorance, the speaker will be sure to win a swivel-headed approval, even though not one single noble impulse has been awakened and not one intelligent purpose

developed in any one of his hearers. The Carpenter could be profoundly simple. He was Himself the embodiment of all truth, and knew how to present it. A striking feature of all the discourses of Jesus Christ is their definiteness; their directness; their applicability to the common needs of the common people. There is a universality about the truth He taught giving His utterances perennial freshness. Of all the discourses of the Carpenter none surpasses the Good Shepherd in attractiveness and comprehensiveness. A child reads it with open-eyed wonder, while the most learned man revels in its inspirations and illuminations.

It begins like the prelude of a beautiful Oratorio. It is sweet and soothing, but it moves on in stirring notes, surprises and soul-thrilling variations. There are the thunders of condemnation, then the lute-like melodies of a lullaby; then, again, the piercing voice of warning in the piccolo. Our eyes rest on running brooks and well-watered plains. We see green pastures and flowing fountains, rugged mountain-sides and deep cañons. The approaching wolf and the masked lion appear. But foremost is the Good Shepherd in all the benignity, the courage, the tenderness of His being, caring for His sheep.

The imagery and symbolism are kaleidoscopic. The figures change, but the outstanding truth is never lost. After we have viewed the various scenes, after we have listened to the sweet or soul-stirring music, we have one thought indelibly stamped on mind and heart; namely, that we are under a Divinely protecting care and are safe.

The Carpenter used the language that would most forcibly present to His Comrades Himself. He was the message He wished to give. Hence it was the ideal discourse. That is the ideal address or sermon that succeeds in leaving the impression that Comradeship with the Carpenter is the greatest thing in the world and that it is possible for everybody today. It matters little whether or not a single sentence can be quoted from the sermon, provided Jesus Christ has been unveiled. The eminent traditionalists had taken exception to the teaching of Jesus, because He had not been ordained. But He had. He had received His ordination from Heaven. There are thousands of men today who have had a far higher endorsement than any Council or Presbytery could possibly give, and yet who are refused recognition because they have not the tag of some school attached to them. This is not to say that a scholastic training with Divine ordination is not eminently desirable. It is, but it is not all, nor even of highest importance.

The first figure employed by Jesus is the sheepfold. In a country pastoral in character, subject to the invasion of hordes of aliens and organized bands of ruffians and infested with wild beasts, the sheepfold was immensely important. It represented security for the sheep. In a world infested with robbers and swindlers, and where the rapaciousness of invisible hosts of evil is a constant menace, a place of protection and personal provision is also of primary significance. The sheepfold must be well builded and inaccessible to any save the Shepherd. "He that entereth in by the door is the shepherd of the sheep. He that climbeth up some other

way the same is a thief and a robber." The Porter is God Almighty. The Good Shepherd is Jesus Christ. The door is first of all the appointed way of salvation, then it is the way into the sheepfold, for the sheep. In the word "climbeth" we find a stirring suggestion of the determined effort ever made to gain self-appointed leadership. Why this constant effort to find some other way of salvation than that provided by Jesus which is so accessible and so satisfying? What tremendous exertion men are making to throw aside the true way and try some new way of safety and life! Atheism and infidelity work overtime to destroy faith in the one and only Door. Trying to scale the battlements of glory is so stupid, when the door is wide open and so easy of entrance. The natural way is, after all, the supernatural way. The difficulties of unbelief are vastly greater than the difficulties of belief. It requires an immense amount of credulity to explain away the Bible, but only common sense to receive it and apply it. Unbelief always raises a thousand times more questions than does belief, and unbelief cannot answer its own questions.

The Carpenter declared Himself the appointed Shepherd, to whom all might come for shelter and safety. To make the relation between Himself and His comrades the closer, He said: "He calleth his own sheep by name and leadeth them out." It was as though He said: "I will guard over the lives and the well-being of My comrades. I know your names, and we will walk in that intimacy of fellowship whereby you can personally realize that you are individually the objects of

my care." What could be more comforting than this definiteness of interest the Carpenter-Christ has in His Comrades along life's way? Embattled and storm-bound pilgrims along life's highway are never without the watch-care of the Great Comrade. Those who talk glibly of wholesale Redemption through a social gospel would do well to study this declaration of the Master. Dr. Horace Bushnell uttered great truth in small compass when he said: "The soul of reformation is the reformation of the soul." One by one, is God's way. It works. Society is saved collectively by being saved individually. "He leadeth them out." There is no safe guidance except Divine guidance. Too many are following blind guides who have never even sought the greater leadership of the Good Shepherd. When we enter into the subtle things of the spirit, where we are dealing with ultimate realities, what human wisdom can be trusted? When Eternal Life is at stake let no one speak to me who is not under the guidance of Christ through comradeship. When the pulses feebly beat and the lights are dimming we want some one who has the ear of God, to comfort and prepare us.

We have not fully appreciated Comradeship with the Carpenter, until we have heard Him calling us by name. His messages bear the substitution of our own name in all the promises and pledges He gives. "I will call you by name; I will lead you out." Out of the mazes, the miasmic swamps, the dangerous pitfalls, the evil conspiracies, the jungles of evil beasts of prey; out of fear, weakness, failure; into peace and happiness and progress and largeness and liberty and loveliness! The

suggestion is of intensity and extensy. Breadth, height, depth, greatness.

The application of the parable is the important matter. The Carpenter spoke in parables because they could be easily applied by those who were sympathetic and they could be so interpreted by Himself to His enemies, that they could not assail Him. Even the haters of Jesus were not worried, and did not interfere, so long as He spoke in parables. People like to be lulled to rest. A parable can be listened to with complacency, because one need not apply it to himself in any unfavorable way. Shooting arrows skyward frightens no one. Artillery turned upon the open sea will not disturb the enemy. Party leaders understand that, and so political platforms are couched in language that can be variously interpreted. Great issues are avoided or dealt with gingerly. A good deal of Christian doctrine is handled in the same way. Phraseology is used that may satisfy Evangelical or Unitarian. As long as men proceed on broad generalities, no one will be antagonized. But what is the use of marking time in that way? All error and evil ask is to be let alone. They are always crying "Peace, Peace," but all the time preventing peace by undermining truth. No man is worth crucifying whose heart is not aflame and whose words do not sometimes become scimiters. That is why most public speakers are not disturbed. They are not worth fighting. They do not say anything, they simply talk. Well rounded rhetorical periods concerning the "Magna Charta" of some dead nation permit the debauchee and the libertine to sleep quietly in the pew.

The gambler and the drunkard are not aroused by rhetoric. It is astonishing how quiet people will be, under a vehement attack on the Jews! Men who all the week have been guilty of betraying their Lord by violating every covenant they have ever taken do not even wince when the minister excoriates Judas for his infamous betrayal of Christ. Men who have taken the last pound of flesh, through mortgage foreclosure, and have transferred another's wealth to their own pockets, do not bat an eye when, with intense vividness, the scene is laid in Venice and Shakespeare's Shylock is hammered. As long as benevolences in general are dealt with, and no appeal for money is made, all goes well, but let the withering truth be personally applied, then it is different. When denunciations of immorality and parsimony and infidelity and dishonesty are made to strike home, the question will be raised whether or not a more "Æsthetic minister whose ideas are in accord with the times" is not better suited to "our advanced people." There is a call then for more culture and less Christ. David could exhibit a wonderful passion for justice until Nathan pointed his finger at him and said: "Thou art the man." He had then one of two courses open; behead the prophet or repent. To many, beheading is the less difficult. The very business of truth is to unmask error. Some one must turn on the searchlight, or the world goes down in a maelstrom of unbelief and uncleanness. The supreme office of love is to burn its way through the veneer, the paint and the varnish, externalities of every kind, and show what lies back of all profession. Our mod-

ern dilettantism enjoys a lukewarm applause and a tepid approbation.

The Carpenter was the personification of kindness. He knew that the world can be drawn but not driven to the higher life. But He knew as well that just as long as sin is masked it will never be feared and will never be eliminated. When, however, He wanted to reveal the attractiveness of Comradeship with Himself, He represented Himself as tenderly solicitous for and unchangeably devoted to the interests of His Comrades. He did not shrink from commonplace comparisons. "I am the door." Now He is on dangerous ground. He is making application of the parable. Profession is costly. When a person is willing to identify himself with some great principle he will make enemies. Stand in the midst of any concourse of people and proclaim yourself a Comrade of the Carpenter, with all that implies, and you will be known then to be opposed to every form of deviltry that is disgracing your home town, and you will be opposed. Knitted brows and upturned lip of scorn will greet your advocacy of some important reform. More than that, if you stand as a true Comrade of the Carpenter long enough, and fulfil your duty, there will be those who will enter into a conspiracy, and will determine upon your financial, your social, your moral crucifixion.

That was just what happened when the Carpenter said: "I am the Good Shepherd." When He began to talk about "thieves and robbers," the cross stood out clear-cut in the horizon. The Carpenter understood just what He was hazarding, for before He finished the

discourse He told what would be the outcome. He dared declare that He and He alone could save mankind. "By me if any man shall enter in, he shall be saved." That is a tremendous word. What is it to be saved? The shipwrecked mariner knows what it means, when he has been delivered from an angry sea and is at last safe on the shore. The sick man who has been down in the shadows and through the skill of man and the help of the Great Comrade has been led back to health, he knows what "saved" means. The condemned man appointed for execution at sunrise and listening for the footfall of the officer who is to lead him to execution, but who receives a pardon at the last moment, he knows what "saved" means. But none of these know, as does one who has heard the invitation of the Carpenter to sacred Comradeship and has entered into sweet fellowship by the "Door."

Once more the Carpenter speaks. "He shall go in and out and find pasture." All the yearnings of the soul represented by hunger, satisfied! This is the promise. Intellectual aspirations for truth, emotional awakenings calling for peace, spiritual outreach, all, all satisfied. Sustenance in order to vigor, that is the thought. Ask the great men of the past two thousand years what "pasture" means. Ask the church fathers, the Reformers, the statesmen. Ask Gladstone, John Bright, Washington, Lincoln, Garfield, to whom they were most indebted. Ask the really great leaders of thought today where they look for mental, moral and spiritual food that builds character. They will all an-

swer in a chorus: "To the Carpenter-Christ, whose comrades we have been through the years."

As the final expression of love, the last word that can be spoken in His call for Comradeship, hear Him say: "I lay down my life for the sheep." That is what it cost to open the way for Comradeship with the Carpenter. This is the full measure of devotion. He has given it. Tenderness, gentleness, watchfulness, kindness, goodness, patience, unfailing devotion, these are the characteristics of the Good Shepherd, the Carpenter-Christ, the Great Comrade of all who answer the royal invitation: "Come unto me." To be His Comrade is vastly more than to believe He was born in Bethlehem, lived in Nazareth and died on the Cross. It is to walk daily with Him in the home, on the street, through all the common daily experiences of life as the Great Companion. His saviourhood must become a reality through submission to His will. Substitutes all fail. Pharisaic pride and Sadducaic unbelief leave a great aching void in the heart. Equally futile are the materialism and agnosticism and rationalism and pantheism and atheism of our day. They meet no deep heart-need and answer no yearning heart call. Comradeship with the Carpenter is the greatest fact of this moment. The splendid consummation will be realized when the people of all nations, kindreds and tongues who are in fellowship with the Great Comrade shall be united under one Headship and crown Him King of kings and Lord of lords; and He will rule from the rivers unto the ends of the earth, and "There shall be one fold and one shepherd."

X

THE COMPULSIONS OF REDEMPTIVE LOVE

THEN SPAKE THE CARPENTER: "The Son of Man must suffer many things . . . and be slain, and be raised the third day."—LUKE 9:22.

You can break with God, but you cannot escape Him. You may cauterize conscience, but you will not be able to destroy it. You may paralyze your moral sensibilities, but experiences will sensitize them again. Truth can be stifled and strangled, but never destroyed. You may bow justice out of the door, but you can never weaken its rights and its powers. Destroying sin does not diminish its deadliness. A broken mirror will not beautify a plain face. The barrier may drive the stream to cover, but sooner or later it will push out again into the open. You may forget God's Book, but you cannot change the inexorableness of the laws therein. Changing the label does not make poison pure. The flags, the band and the painted decks, give no safety to a ship with decayed timbers. A rejected religion loses none of its rights through dismissal. The laws of health may be broken, but the end is feebleness and failure. Opinions of men alter no purposes of God. Hidden reefs refuse to recede simply because the captain is indifferent or defiant. We are creatures and not creators. Defiance of God's will writes its own

doom. The triumphs of evil are quickly changed to the terror of defeat. The capitalists of Gadara who asked Christ to depart after losing the herd of swine impoverished themselves when most they thought to increase their riches. When Christ leaves, judgment remains. The heart of man is never satisfied with any material acquisition. No man is so rich in fortune or fame that he does not need Comradeship with the Carpenter. Historians, true to truth, shadow the crowns of kings and wreathes of heroes with stories of littleness, weakness, and meanness, revealing how impossible it is for unaided human nature to reach any noble ideal. Material acquisitions which cost the dismissal of Christ, carry their own penalty. We must meet our yesterdays. But how? Only the Cross answers the question how we may meet our yesterdays without dread. Sin must be dealt with adequately. It definitely separates man from God. It must be eliminated. God does that very thing through His Son.

Given a lost world and a pitying God, a saving provision and process inevitably follows. A world to be lifted, what leverage is adequate? A usurper enthroned, how can he be unseated and the sceptre of the Eternal King recognized? A world engulfed and corrupted, how can it be purified? A world enslaved, whence and how is liberty to be experienced? Discord and discontent, how attune the unstrung harp to celestial pitch and produce divine melody? A world sick in sin, where is the physician who can heal? Discouragement, despondency, whence is lasting hope? What transforming energy can operate to irrigate a

desert and produce from a wilderness a garden of beauty? Is it possible to convert weakness into strength, sorrow into joy, despair into delight, guilt to innocence? Nature converts clay into opal, black carbon into diamonds; why then cannot God effect the greater heart transformation?

This was the Carpenter's problem. The image of God was lost through transgression, but not the consciousness of God and duty. A universal belief in a Supreme Being is scarcely open to question. A universal sense of dependence and need is a patent fact. A universal consciousness of guilt is perfectly evident from a universal, sacrificial effort to gain relief. Added to these is the fact that there is a universal aspiration, though sometimes feebly manifested, to gain divine recognition and approval. All these things give confidence that man can be approached successfully and ultimately saved.

There are many influences tending to neutralize and nullify man's outreach for God and truth. The battle for existence is fierce, persistent and absorbing. Whip and spur drive the flagging energies. Ensnaring pleasures exert even a more deleterious influence. Myriad voices sing their siren song. The sweet note of truth is lost. A thousand sensuous delights offer themselves and plead for recognition. Selfishness asserts itself and blights the brightest bud of promise. Self-indulgence leads to auto-intoxication, then to paralysis, and finally to death.

Into these conditions and facing these problems, came the Carpenter. Salvation must be a fact, or creation a

failure. The problem was God's. No other could answer it. The most striking feature of the teaching, doing and dying of Christ is its inexorableness and inevitableness. With the steadiness with which the needle holds to the pole-star, the Carpenter moved to the Cross. There were no aberrations, no temporary departures, no derelictions. He was clearly under an inner control. A review of that matchless life leaves no room to doubt the fullest freedom of action, together with unquestioning compulsion. His first public utterance was made while yet a child: "Wist ye not that I must be about my Father's business?" In His public ministry the suggestion of an inner urge appears: "The Son of Man must suffer many things." "I must preach the kingdom." "I must walk today." "The Son of Man must be delivered into the hands of sinful men." "I must work the works of him that sent me."

Here we have the explanation of the constant imperative in the teaching, doing and dying, the Resurrection and Ascension of Jesus Christ.

The Cross of Jesus is the central core of Christianity. It was there redemptive love found its largest and its final expression. There is no incentive to repentance, sacrificial devotion, complete consecration, comparable in cogency with the redemptive love of God expressed in the sacrifice of Jesus for the sins of the world. The Carpenter could never have gained Comrades save through the call of the Cross. Loving sacrifice makes an irresistible appeal. It comes weighted with a father's pity and a mother's tenderness. Redemptive love opens the holy of holies in the heart of

God to every child of humanity. It offers pardon and peace for which it furnishes a rational basis. No arbitrary decree of forgiveness could give peace to a guilt-burdened soul. Before a sinful man can have fellowship with God, unholiness must be changed to holiness. The gateway through which man must pass first is the gateway of repentance. Every selfish instinct opposes it. Pride rebels against it. Man will break before he will bend. Appetites and tendencies of the natural heart rebel against it. Only Redemptive Love can melt down the icy citadel of self-satisfaction and admit the King of Glory. The sunshine is more effective in destroying a citadel of ice than a modern battery would be. Regenerating grace is simply a deposit of redemptive love in the human heart to transform and unfold it. Christianity is distinctively re-creative. It stands in bold contrast with self-repair. It is thoroughly revolutionary.

The change from a life of simple self-indulgence to one of self-abnegation and righteousness is unspeakably great. It means conflict; war to the death; uncompromising engagement to supplant evil with good. Life is governed by its adopted ideals. Christianity's conception of success is unique. The Carpenter taught His comrades that they must surrender in order to conquer, lose in order to win, die in order to live. But ideals are tantalizing and disappointing unless we have power to realize them. Precisely this is what the Carpenter imparts to His comrades. This is one of the unique features of Christianity. The Christian ideal

carries within itself a divine potency. Ideals fix eternity.

The task presented to the comrades of the Carpenter is a sublime one. The redemptive compulsion must have its counterpart in the Comrades of Christ, in working out salvation. The cogent motive in all spiritual activity is the glory of God and personal perfection. The credential of the Christian is service and sacrifice. A life whose motive and method are restorational, furnishes absolute proof of the sincerity of its profession. Only comradeship with Christ will insure an adequate dynamic in the individual Christian. Christianity is a religion of activity and achievement. It has been wisely said: "Christ found religion a rite, and He made it a passion." Redemptive love is the one irresistible dynamic on this planet. This explains the unapproachable superiority of the religion of Jesus. Thor, the god of the Norsemen, had his hammer. Jupiter his thunder-bolt, Vulcan his forge, but Jesus came with a new weapon. The only sword He ever unsheathed was the sword of Redemptive Love. With this He proposed for Himself world-wide imperialism. He dared to prophesy universal dominion. With an optimism audacious as it was sublime, He predicted the capture of a world that hated Him. After His death, when the great Cause was in the shadow of temporary eclipse, His Comrades, filled with the passion of Redemptive Love, though thwarted in their plans, maligned and maltreated, yet made bold to declare: "The stone which was set at nought of you builders has become the head of the corner."

Redemptive love is the synthetic of all truth. In human history extremes have followed each other with unceasing regularity. The songs of Homer filled the world with the expectation of prevailing and controlling joy and promised a golden age of plenty. They had hardly died away before the dirge of Æschylus foreboded destruction and declared life not worth living. The Hebrew prophets made hopefulness an article of faith, yet with them Davidics are followed by Jermiads. History repeats itself. Leibnitz beheld a world so beautiful that he could conceive of no better paradise. Schopenhauer cynically breathes lamentations over the imperfections of the world and the failure of life. Redemptive love prevents unreasonable optimism and prohibits a pessimism which would paralyze the nerve of human effort.

Faith has a true rationale. It rests on reason and experience. The consciousness of the indwelling of Redemptive Love furnishes the Christian his deepest joy and presents the grounds of sacrificial service. The testimony of the Carpenter's comrades wins the world. Love experienced is the basis of love expressed. The Carpenter was able to impart His spirit to His Comrades. He does today. Comradeship has repeatedly meant imprisonment, obloquy, persecution, death. The splendid triumphs of the apostolic period finds its only explanation in the inner urge awakened by companionship with Christ. The martyr spirit was conspicuous. Progress was phenomenal. Nothing could stay the wheels of the redeeming chariot of God. Within three centuries the Comrades of the Carpenter lifted the ban-

ner of the Cross above the Roman eagles. They compelled the standards of all nations to dip to the new ensign, which was "Christ and Him crucified." But temporal successes in the Church have always strangely led to a weakening of the compulsions of Redemptive Love. After the apostolic period, the spirit of sacrifice diminished. The Church became popular. The force of arms and the imposing grandeur of ecclesiastical organization were substituted for the dynamic of redeeming love. A spectacular religion supplanted spiritual service. The decline continued for five hundred years. The Carpenter had lost His Comrades. The transforming power of the Church had gone. Subtle speculations and empty sophistries covered the pearls of truth. Casuistry obscured Christ. The discussion of arid themes took the place of "Christ and Him crucified."

Then again came the Carpenter, and new Comrades. We have the Reformation. Wycliff appeared and undertook to arouse the inert mass which called itself a church. It moved just enough to crush him. Huss blew the bugle note of appeal for a return to Christ. The sweet melody was soon silenced. Luther, the monk of Erfurt, felt the inner stirrings of Redemptive Love. Under its mandate, he inaugurated the new era. "Every man his own priest, God approachable by all, the Bible its own interpreter," these were the watchwords. The wheel, the fagot and the rack were the arguments which were faced unflinchingly. The new era had begun under the compulsions of Redemptive Love and has continued with cumulative power up to the present.

Only Christian nations are progressive. This is true commercially, industrially, intellectually, ethically and spiritually. All conceptions of life have taken on to a greater or less degree a religious aspect. Art conceptions have changed. The masterpieces of Rabinowitz and Holman Hunt owe their popularity to the fact that they touch a sympathetic chord in the heart of humanity. Literary activity in distinctively religious lines is prodigious. The works today passing through the largest number of editions are such works as Charles M. Sheldon's *In His Steps*. The evangelical zeal of today bears the stamp of a high order of intelligence. There is an extraordinary interest in new editions of the Word of God. Never were there so many men and women of high intellectual standing seriously studying the Bible. In the world of feeling, the compulsions of Redemptive Love are multiplying philanthropies. Sympathy is the watchword. The victims of tyranny awaken pity and reclamatory effort. Childhood is studied and better understood than ever before. Hospitals, homes, asylums indicate the practical application of Redeeming Love to the crying needs of the unfortunate.

Christianity an expended force? What declaration could be more absurd! Let the comrades of the Carpenter waste no time in argument. The best answer to Goldwin Smith and Anthony Froude is the magnificently cumulative energy of the Church today. It is no novel thing for cultivated minds to assail the Church. The Church's answer must be her sympathetic devotion to the teachings and ideals of the Car-

penter of Nazareth. It is noteworthy that Christian progress has been wholly and solely along the lines of evangelical Christianity. The missionary work of the present generation has cost incalculable sacrifice, but it has been done cheerfully. A victorious type of piety is produced only when the heroic aspects of Redemptive Love are faithfully set forth. The Comrades of the Carpenter need not be unduly distressed, even though apostasy has reached appalling proportions. Two periods of atheism preceding this were virulent, abusive, and comprehended a far larger number of thinking people than the present movements of infidelity. There are intermittent waves of unbelief which move over the world like a pestilence. The activities of rationalistic atheism today may temporarily retard, but cannot permanently prevent, the advance of God's Church. Deism in England, atheism in France, rationalism in Germany are spent forces. Materialistic modernism of our own time is doomed to decay and disappearance. We need unwearying patience. The utmost fidelity is demanded. Love must still be the commanding and controlling power. Objections offered by the enemies of Christianity can never be answered by holy maledictions. Close fellowship with a communicable Christ can alone develop a redemptive passion in the Church of God, which will produce a world-wide revival. The Carpenter-Christ is *here*. "From Edom with dyed garments from Bozrah, traveling in the greatness of His power, Mighty to Save."

XI

CIVILIZING, SOCIALIZING, CHRISTIANIZING THE WORLD

THEN SPAKE THE CARPENTER: "Peace, be still . . . and there was a great calm." "Come forth, thou unclean spirit, out of the man."—MARK 4:39; 5:8.

CREATION was accomplished without effort. Running the natural universe demands a perpetual exercise of Divine power. He who created the world stayed with it. He never abandoned it. Should He do so, the result would be chaos. He who created the world controls it. He left room for His especial personal activity with the certainty of intervention whenever circumstances demand it. Miracle is the exceptional manifestation of God's power. In the days of the Carpenter, He was often dealing with the tempest of natural elements. Crossing the Sea of Galilee on one occasion with His Comrades, an opportunity offered itself for the demonstration of His Divineness in controlling wind and wave. The short voyage across the sea revealed the fact that His Comrades are by no means rendered immune from danger and difficulty from the mere fact of comradeship. They were doing precisely what He counseled. They were diligently carrying out the program He prepared. It was in the fulfillment of duty that they found themselves im-

periled. A boisterous wind sweeping down the heights from the eastern shore lashed the waters to a foaming fury.

Probably no sheet of water presents greater contrast at successive intervals than the Sea of Galilee. No lake could be more beautifully placid than is beautiful blue Galilee when it *is* placid. On the other hand, no body of water of its size is more threatening than this when lashed by the winds. Its waves rise almost to the heights of the waves of the storm-swept ocean. The changes are sudden and violent. On this occasion, the boat was beginning to sink, and the terrified company was amazed to discover Jesus sleeping soundly. Divine power was there, but for the moment it was inactive.

Life itself is very much like that voyage. Many of our journeys are taken after prayerful preparation. Duty is clear. We are sure the Great Comrade is with us, but suddenly and unexpectedly tempestuous winds endanger our enterprise and imperil life itself. The sleeping Christ in the Galilee boat and the weary Christ at Jacob's well show us how marvelous are God's ways in furnishing a basis for a true sympathy between Himself and us. How much better we understand Him because of this Galilee storm and its results! We know He understands us because, when living His human life, He could sleep in the face of tempest, and because He was weary at Jacob's well. The Carpenter knew what it was both to be sleepy and to be tired. That in itself gives a basis of mutual fellowship. It makes His relationship with us both close and comforting. The comrades, just because they were comrades, had

an available help right at hand. He quickly responded to their challenge. It was one which has echoed and re-echoed down the corridors of time to the present moment, "Carest thou not that we perish?" In the stress of trouble, this is the immediate mental and spiritual emotion. It is a question, then, as to whether or not God knows and if He knows, cares. Hear His response. It is prompt, it is positive, it indicates a consciousness of absolute Divineness: "Peace, be still." This command was addressed to wind and wave.

In those words He proclaimed once and forever that the tides of the ocean, the winds of Heaven, the electric forces of the sky are under His absolute control. He can use them at will. "He maketh the clouds his chariot." He rides on the wings of the wind. He can handle all the forces of nature with Divine ease. Does He do it? He certainly does, and in a larger degree than we are accustomed to believe or understand. There are Lilliputian minds, dreamers and unbelievers with shrivelled faith, who undertake to explain away the Gospel declaration, "The wind ceased and there was a great calm." A thousand problems are raised whenever you try to dissolve away a supernatural fact through a natural explanation. It complicates matters tremendously to abandon the perfectly evident meaning of God's Word and impose your own ideas upon events narrated. The Comrades of the Carpenter knew what happened. They were there. They made a record of it. We have the record. There is nothing startling or strange about it when you know the Carpenter. The trouble is, people who do not know Him undertake to

interpret Him. The immediateness of the response of nature to the command of the Carpenter settles forever, in the minds of His real Comrades, the fact of His true Divinity. If God's only problem consisted in successfully dealing with the powers of nature, His task would be simple indeed. In the natural world, obedience is prompt, and without exception. He speaks, and it is done. He wills, and nothing in nature can withstand His will. Except for extraordinary reasons, God rules His world along the lines of natural law. Divine energy is constantly operating along the lines of what we call law.

But what is natural law? It is nothing more nor less than God's method of doing things. There is no potency in law. It does nothing. Law is merely the channel in which the stream of Divine purpose is flowing. It is the path God travels. When conditions require it, the author of nature steps in and takes a hand in its manipulation in unusual ways. He makes declaration of His purposeful presence to accomplish some specific thing. In the period when the Carpenter most peculiarly announced the presence of God, He did this again and again. Those are the acts which we call miracles. They were supernatural, but perfectly natural to Him. In the stress of storm and trial in any sort of peril or affliction, the Comrades of the Carpenter today are just as sure of an active response to their appeal for help as were His fellow-passengers in the Galilee boat. Nothing that is necessary or desirable will the Carpenter withhold from His Comrades today. Calm follows the appeal of faith.

The Galilee storm was over. What next? Another storm. How true to life! For the average individual life is a series of storms of one kind or another. No wonder the divinely inspired Prince and Poet cried: "Oh, for the wings of a dove, that I might fly away, and be at rest." But this rest is not always granted in the way we seek it. It is better oftentimes to ride out the storm. It is a great thing, when the Euroclydon is wildest, to be able to say, with the great Apostle Paul to the terrified passengers upon the imperiled ship: "Be of good cheer." No man knew better than he how to face life's storms. The secret of his superlative optimism lay wholly in his consciousness of comradeship with the Carpenter. When we have finished one trial, we ought to be the better prepared for the next, which is likely to follow soon. Life is not so much imperiled by a stormy sea as it is by becalmed waters.

The Galilee storm was followed by the Gadara storm. Here was something different. The Carpenter and His Comrades had reached their haven. Everything seemed propitious. Imagine with what awe and reverence and love this little group of disciples must have now looked upon the great Teacher! They were spellbound at the way in which He had spoken the storm into quiet! They had reached their haven, and were prepared now for a period of repose. Not yet; another storm. A man wild in appearance and wilder still in his emotions came rushing threateningly toward them. He uttered a wild cry of recognition addressed to Jesus. "What have I to do with thee, Jesus, thou Son of the Most High God?" Dethroning demons is a most difficult

undertaking even for God Almighty. Dealing with the powers of evil incarnate is vastly more difficult than manipulating the forces of nature. When God gave man free will, He entered upon a terrific experiment. The heart of man is the greatest battlefield in the world. Here are witnessed the greatest defeats and the most magnificent victories that are anywhere experienced. The roar of cannon and the clashing of sabres is not to be compared with the invisible contentions where man rises to his greatest heights or falls to his lowest depth. Light and darkness are forever in contention. Good and evil stand with drawn swords or rush into combat with clashing sabres. The stake is tremendous. It is nothing less than eternal life or eternal death. The rightful ruler of the soul of man is his Creator, but a usurper is always near at hand to take possession of an unguarded throne.

Demonic influence need not be doubted. It is a reality even today. Whenever the powers of evil are in the ascendent it is, in a very real sense, demoniacal possession. Something is dragging man down. He has to fight to keep his feet. When you see a bather disappear in the surf, you have no doubt about the fact of the undertow. When you see men and women morally going down, you cannot doubt that some force is gripping them to destroy. It must be evident to any observer that man, unaided, is not able to cope with the deadly influences which seek to destroy him. If he could do so, he would. There are noble impulses in every human life. It is very important to appreciate that the most marred life has still the remnants of ro-

alty. When overpowered by evil, faith in the essential dignity of human nature, together with faith in the love and purpose of God, leads us to believe in the saveableness of every soul.

The freedom which God gave to man is, after all, a limited freedom. In view of the insistence of evil in its effort to gain control of the human heart, liberty itself is confined to a choice of masters. Evil or good will be in the ascendent in the direct force of life. A decision not to choose God is in effect to choose evil. The citadel of the soul is never bombarded by the Infinite. God accepts no sceptre which is not voluntarily proffered. Indeed, constituted as He is, He could not if He would. When He is not in control, Satanic forces surely are. This may not be very apparent, yet it is real. When life is evidently dominated by unholy influences we say, and very properly, that such an one is possessed of the devil. We need not be timid, nor need we shrink too much from using terms that best and most definitely describe conditions.

The Carpenter was always facing the problem of getting evil out of the human heart and getting good in. During the two and one-half years of His public ministry, He was almost always in the storm zone. The storm which confronted Him, represented in the demoniac, was fierce indeed. "Straightway there met him, out of the tombs, a man with an unclean spirit." It is the nature of evil that it is first of all unclean. The defiling influence of sin is appalling. It mars, it blackens, it pollutes, it degrades, it destroys. This demoniac afforded an opportunity for Jesus Christ to assert once

and forever His power over incarnate evil. Only by the enthronement of Himself, which must be with human consent, can the usurper be prevented from returning and taking control. It is doubtless true that demoniacal possession had peculiar and special features at this particular time, when the achievement of salvation for humanity was arousing the powers of darkness to their utmost fury. The man with whom He now had to deal is described as wild, uncontrollable and a constant menace to society. It is in the nature of wickedness to dissocialize the individual. It makes of the individual an outlaw, gradually, nevertheless really. Enough of such people can threaten the very existence of organized governments, which can never be maintained save through the righteous purpose of a majority to protect the interests of all. This man was living among the tombs. He was an anarchist. He was the enemy of his fellow-men. His presence was a menace to the entire community. He was opposed to law enforcement. He did not believe in constitutions. He was against a government, no matter what that government was. His continuous theme was personal liberty. Wild as he was, he waxed eloquent when talking about individual rights. He had become so imbued with his opposition to government that ordinary restraints were unavailing.

How better could lawlessness be described than thus personalized? The crime wave of today is only a violent demonstration of dissocialized men, who are bent on the overthrow of the moral and social order. This thing has its extreme expression in personal violence.

Whenever each man is bent on satisfying his own appetites, gratifying his own desires regardless of the interests of his fellow-men, he has become dissocialized and thoroughly anarchistic. Every form of evil has to a greater or less degree these same characteristics. Anarchy is only incarnate evil, breaking down restraints, tearing asunder chains—only, instead of being chains forged with steel, they are in the nature of proper restrictions upon the lawless, necessary to make communities safe. Civilization represents a sufficient enthronement of righteousness, justice, goodness, to insure a voluntary limitation of individualism and a full coöperation for the prevention of violence at the hands of the lawless and vicious.

The effect of the Carpenter upon evil was immediate and positive. Wherever He appeared opposition was violent. Unrighteousness hates righteousness. Nothing is so irritating to unholiness as holiness itself. A revival is always the signal for an outbreak of vituperative abuse of Christianity. This man, dominated by the powers of darkness, knew Christ and hated Him. The evil spirit within him engaged in a sort of worship, but it was a loveless worship. The prayer uttered was an importuning, agonizing request to be let alone. Evil asks no assistance, it only asks to be left to itself. That is precisely why it is not always enough to proclaim truth, it is sometimes necessary to attack evil. Worship which is devoid of love possesses no quality which commends the suppliant to God. A selfish prayer receives no acknowledgment or response from the Almighty.

In answer to the inquiry, "What is thy name?" the demoniac answered: "My name is Legion, for we are many." The resources of iniquity are tremendous. You never know how many or how great are the invisible powers of darkness in any community, where law-defiers are combining to prevent their own overthrow and to insure continuance in their iniquitous work. One of the most disheartening features in all moral reform work lies in the many-sidedness and the almost limitless resources of incarnate iniquity. Another discouragement is found in the timidity and hesitancy of those who claim to love truth and goodness but who are unwilling to come out in the open and face the Gadarene demoniac. What the organized forces of society could not do in that particular community, Jesus promptly did. He and He alone can still the tempests of the mind and heart. He and He alone can dethrone demons and completely reconstruct character. This He does by personally taking complete possession of a life, driving forth entrenched evil and enthroning Himself. The first essential to a reconstructed character is not simply a resolution to overcome and conquer some evil power of the soul, but to avail oneself of Divine Power. Indeed, the resolution to realize righteousness must carry with it an invitation to Christ Himself to evict the usurper and take possession of the throne.

When this is done the storm elements of life give place to calm and constructive experiences. A restoration to normalcy carries with it immediately a constant comradeship with the Carpenter. Sinfulness is abnormal. Unbelief is not the normal condition of the

soul. The normal condition of a life created in the image of God is one of sympathetic relations and true fellowship with God Himself. The results of that Divine exorcism which overthrows evil in the soul could not be more perfectly stated than in the description of the demoniac of Gadara after the evil spirit had been ejected. This is the record: "And they came to Jesus and behold him that was possessed of demons, sitting, clothed and in his right mind." In these three facts we have presented the inevitable effect of Comradeship with Christ. "Sitting" is a description of complete self-command. It is an attitude of self-repose in which self-control is a predominant quality. It is the attitude of royalty, dignified, masterful, contented, commanding. This is precisely what Christianity does to the individual life. It takes away restlessness, peacelessness, the spirit of rebellion, anarchistic independence, and it produces the regal qualities of composure, a sense of adequate ability, a spirit of coöperation and willing obedience to law. Before this man had become a Comrade of the Carpenter he was rushing restlessly here and there, endangering those with whom he came in contact, without self-command, dominated and directed by the evil within him.

It is also recorded that he was found "clothed." This is one of the distinctively civilizing evidences. It suggests the discrimination between evil and good. It expresses a sense of refinement and delicacy, always a mark of civilization. Far greater than outward apparel of course is the importance of what this word suggests with reference to the soul; namely, the garment of

righteousness which is by faith. In Paul's great doctrine of justification by faith, he directs attention to the fact that only the robe of righteousness proffered the disciple by Jesus Himself prepares one for the presence of God. Jesus likens the new qualities of character which come from obedience to His will and appropriated by faith, to a wedding garment which admits the guest to the feast.

Civilizing processes are often attended with revolutionary experiences. The demoniac was torn before he was tranquilized. Men do not readily give up customs and practices, which, however barbaric, have long been practiced. Christian civilization is an enemy to every form of unrighteousness. No civilization reaches a very high altitude until it has felt the transforming touch and the imperial edict of the Carpenter. When Jesus spoke the word of exorcism, "Come out of him, thou unclean spirit," this man was at once socialized. Legislate as we may, increase the severity of punishment as we will, our civilization will still be menaced by vicious men until the commanding, the controlling word of Christ meets with full response. The same thing is true internationally. The spirit of war is demoniacal, and the champions of militarism seem to fail to recognize that there are no chains which can bind the war demon. Christianity is the one and only hope of realizing a warless world.

It is definitely related that in response to the expressed power of the Carpenter this man was restored to sanity. He immediately sought to become a Comrade of the Carpenter. He had found true mental bal-

ance. What is it to be in one's right mind if not to seek the companionship of Jesus Christ, and the development of those qualities so manifest in His life? A person is mentally unbalanced until regenerated. Unforgiven sin makes one incompetent to pronounce fair judgment, and incapable of correct discriminations. He sees, but he does not see things in their right relation. Christian mentality is the highest form of mentality. Intellectualism which is proud of itself and ignores Christ is neither high nor deep nor broad. Thinking God's thoughts after Him gives a power of discernment which is secured in no other way. Mental stabilization is a product of Comradeship with the Carpenter.

As might be expected, Christ's act of dethroning evil brought about an immediate collision between Him and the swine-herders. It was violent. They besought Him to depart out of their coasts, because He had permitted the evil spirits to enter the swine—where, in fact, they more properly belonged—and the entire herd had rushed over the precipice into the sea. The capitalists of Gadara were much more concerned about swine than in salvation. The saving of the man was nothing to them as compared to their losses. They besought Him to depart, and wanted Him to go at once. When you touch either purse or pleasure, look out for trouble.

Right here is the secret of the present-day difficulty in law enforcement. The liquor problem would present no great difficulty were it not for the purse passion and the pleasure passion. It is not a question of personal

liberty; it is a question of personal license. The men who asked Christ to depart have had many descendants. The Carpenter takes men at their word. When He is told that Comradeship with Him is not desired, and He is asked to leave, He departs. There is no petition which invites poverty like the petition which requests Christ to go away.

The Carpenter once and for all made plain that the felicity of Comradeship with Himself is of secondary importance. Christianity must be a force, rather than a felicity, though it should be both. The man who had been restored and saved was naturally exultant and appreciative. Jesus made clear to him that his first thought should be service rather than mere satisfaction. He was told to go and tell his friends and neighbors what great things the Lord had done for him. This required courage, but it was the imperative condition of a continuation of the very happiness he was experiencing. Fearlessness, aggressiveness and enthusiasm in witness-bearing is necessary to the growth of Christianity. Comrades of the Carpenter must not only be confessors, but witnesses to the blessedness of comradeship. It is through testimony that the cause of Christ is to triumph. The Christian Church has as one of its superb tasks the socialization of society. There is only one method whereby this can be accomplished; that is, by Christianizing governments and ethicalizing all the inter-relations of men.

When the individual members of society fulfil all that is represented in this picture of the enthronement of Jesus Christ: "sitting, clothed, and in his right

mind," the world will become a world of beauty and blessedness. What a world this would be if right and truth and goodness were in control! Instead of the wail of sorrow, a song of joy. Instead of tears, love and laughter; instead of anguish, exhilarant happiness; instead of broken covenants, loyalty, with good-will and good cheer. No sleepless nights, dreading the morning's revelations. Instead of cruelty, caresses; instead of envy and jealousy, applause and coöperation. Work without weariness; hope with no disappointments; gloom lost in glory; society bound together with the cords of sympathy. Then would swords be beaten into ploughshares and spears into pruning-hooks. Evil would be overcome with good. Chaos would be changed to order; discord to harmony; dirges to Davidics; trial to triumph. Only the wave-stilling, demoniac-dethroning, death-mastering Carpenter-Christ, together with His courageous Comrades, can ever make life worth living for the multitudes who mourn, and who suffer from the iron heel of cruelty and hate. He it is who can change desert wastes to gardens of beauty, and make soul-filling joy a reality in every life.

XII

THUNDER, AN ANGEL OR THE VOICE OF GOD?

THEN SPAKE THE CARPENTER: "Father, save me from this hour. But for this cause came I unto this hour. Father, glorify thy name."—JOHN 12:27-28.

HE WAS the Carpenter. Was He more? How much more? The agelong question. Get the setting. The occasion was the Jewish Passover. The Carpenter knew a price was on His head. The inner urge was irresistible. He went to the feast. To a great soul, danger is no deterrent to duty. That explains martyrdoms. That explains human progress. Bethany first. Beautiful, hospitable, soul-cheering Bethany! Here comradeship found its fullest expression. Mutual understanding and good will constitute the basis for joy at its fullest. Life is made up of lights and shadows. The cheer of the lights makes possible the endurance of the chill of the shadows. The Carpenter gratefully accepted the anointing. In all human history the breaking of bread together has been used to strengthen the ties of fellowship. The supper at Bethany was the brief respite before the impending tragedy. Then came the great acclaim. Hosannah! Waving palms and spread garments! The coronation of the Carpenter? Not yet. Calvary first.

The feast of the passover was now on. The Carpenter met the challenge and was there, self-composed and commanding. Then the eager inquiry. Certain Greeks sought contact with the Carpenter: "Sir, we would see Jesus." Who were they? Proselytes of the Gate, probably from Decapolis. Philip and Andrew had been their neighbors. What more natural than to seek introduction at the hands of old-time friends? To the Greeks, Jesus was a notable teacher. But more. How much more? Ah, that is the question of the centuries. Thunder, an angel, or God? They knew enough to want to know more. That is the beginning of the larger life. Desire to know is the primary requisite of larger truth. "Then shall ye know, if ye follow on to know the Lord."

What prompted the inquiry? Not curiosity. When acquaintance means contempt and perhaps much more, only a strong reason will lead to a request for an introduction. We like to meet people of high social standing and who can benefit us. The Carpenter had no standing with the Crown, though He was in favor with a part of the crowd. The petition was brief. That is a good indication. Earnestness begets brevity. When the house is aflame, "Fire!" is a sufficient proclamation of need. We take circuitous linguistic routes when nothing is at stake. Prayers would be effective if consciousness of real need prompted them. Here is the cry of humanity's inner voice ever since the Carpenter taught and lived and loved and died. "Sir, we would see Jesus." A needy world asks of the ministers of the Word, "Sir, we would see Jesus." If they get a

stone instead of bread, the pews are empty. There are no substitutes for Jesus. A modified, mutilated, watered-down message answers no deep questions of the soul. Only one course will attract, interest, satisfy and sanctify, and that is to show Christ to those who are asking for Him. Literature, beautiful poems, human opinions, sophisms, novelties—none of these bring any contentment. There is in the soul of man enough of the Divine to call for God. The best in the soul is struggling to find Christ. The cry is stifled. The inner suppliant is beaten down, choked, starved, neglected, but still there is the cry: "Sir, we would see Jesus." This is the need of nations, churches, individuals, a new discovery of the Carpenter, in order to closer comradeship.

Then spake the Carpenter: He talked of being glorified. He said the chronometer had struck the hour for glory. How instructive the transitional hour and the nature of tribulation! Through toil to rest! Through trial to coronation! Through sorrow to joy! It is always thus. We should have expected Him to say: "The hour has come that the Son of Man must be buffeted, denied, neglected, tortured, despised, betrayed."

The lesson emphasized to Comrades of the Carpenter is this: Waste no time in vain regrets. He had none. We have, but must dismiss them. Be not overborne by the present. When trying experiences are impending we are not to let the world close in on us. Through storm, through fog, through hate, through every sort of opposition, we are to climb to life, to light, to glory. A short segment of the circle does not reveal the final goal. Con-

summations reassure us. We must keep before our vision some glimpses of the ultimate glory, in order to bear uncomplainingly the burden of today. What an inspiration to live in the atmosphere of glory! The Carpenter did, and expects His Comrades to. He did not linger ever in the atmosphere of His Cross and its shadows.

*“He giveth more grace when the burdens grow greater;
He sendeth more strength when the labors increase.
To added affliction He addeth His mercy,
To multiplied trials His multiplied peace.”*

*“His love has no limit, His grace has no measure;
His power no boundary known unto men;
For out of His infinite riches in Jesus
He giveth, and giveth, and giveth again.”*

“The hour has come.” Betrayal—Gethsemane—Cross—Tomb—Resurrection—Glory! Do you sense it? Can you see through? Napoleon took his army across the Alps. They fell by the way in hundreds. He pressed on. Why? Italy! That is the way victories are won by Comrades of the Carpenter. The student, the merchant, the mechanic, the accountant, the clerk, the professional man—all, all gain power through glimpses of the glory, ahead. The Carpenter was ever uttering puzzling paradoxes. Lose life, and you find it. Take hold by letting go, win by losing, multiply by dividing, live by dying.

Which found his life by losing it—Paul, whose immortal words have been the spiritual stimulus to courageous witnessing for nearly twenty centuries, or Nero, execrated even in memory? Who lives most

today—the great emperors who employed fire and rack and sword to destroy Christianity, or the noble army of martyrs who cried in death: “Father, glorify thy name”? Which lost and which saved his life—Benedict Arnold or the hero of Valley Forge? Who has more really found his life than Livingstone, Paton, Taylor and a thousand other of the noble martyr missionaries of the Cross? Dan Crawford has just gone to his reward; who is there among all the most eminent among men of wealth and high position who can expect the jewelled crown of Divine favor comparable to Dan Crawford, who literally lost his life to glorify God and proclaim to a benighted people in Africa the possibility of Comradeship with the Carpenter? The “Voice” had spoken to him and through him. God was no distant deity to him. He walked with his Unseen Comrade, and was cheered on to his splendid task by the consciousness that he was never alone. Among the men of this generation Dan Crawford stands out as one among ten thousand in beauty of life, self-effacement, self-forgetfulness and in absolute acceptance of the Bible as “This Voice.”

Either God came in the Carpenter, or He will never be known. “He that hath seen me hath seen the Father,” said the Carpenter. It wonderfully aids us in glorifying God to know that He was here in the flesh, passing through all the experiences of human life, save sin. But how necessary in the face of bitter trials and outrageous persecutions and cruel suffering, that we should know that He who bore our griefs and carried our sorrows is with us today! It makes the struggle

up, less difficult. It makes service more worth while. Comradeship with the Carpenter-Christ develops a hatred of sin and a love for righteousness.

Nothing is more demonstrably true. Who are the great national leaders most admired? Those whose promotion gives them no concern, but who lose life in behalf of great principles and live for the people. Why has Congress come to such a sorry pass? Because with many the question of vote-getting swallows up all other considerations. Self-seeking, political betrayals of sacred trusts have been the experience of too many Congressmen.

A few years ago in Tulsa, New Mexico, a successful lawyer dreamed of a time when he might speak out and let the people know conditions as they are. His wife's health failed, and he was ordered to Albuquerque. He purchased a newspaper that had been instrumental in putting Albert Fall into the United States Senate. He began to tell the truth about how votes by thousands had been controlled, through control of the water-holes the farmers were compelled to use for their cattle and other live stock. One day a man stalked into his office, pointed to the newspaper and said: "Cut that out." He replied: "Mr. Fall, I do not understand that an editor can be dictated to as to how he shall run his paper." "Cut that out, or we will cut you out," was the reply. He found that five editors in succession had been taken to the borders of Arizona and thrown out, because they dared to tell the truth. What was he to do? He did not falter. He still told the truth. It was due to this same man, Carl Magee, that the warrant was

issued at Washington for Albert Fall. He challenged them to find out why it was that Albert Fall had been able to spend three hundred thousand dollars on his Three Rivers Ranch, when he had told Magee he was dead broke at the time Magee purchased the paper. Here were two men, one seeking promotion, the other seeking to tell the truth. One saving his life, and the other losing it in the interests of the people. What followed? Every kind of persecution for Magee and finally, through conspiracy, a trial for libel. The trial was conducted in the Don country, one hundred and sixty miles away, where perjured witnesses could be obtained and where conviction regardless of justice would be possible. It looked hard for the man trying to be true to the people. He went. He was convicted and sentenced.

In addition to imprisonment the judge fined him for contempt of court. Before leaving for Los Vegas Mr. Magee said to his wife: "You have had to stand many things; social ostracism, sneers, and many petty indignities. The prison door is opening. Can you stand it for your Carl to go to prison?" Hear the answer: "I can stand it vastly better than I could stand it to see you try to escape duty." "That settles it," he said. He went. There are the two men. Which saved his life and which lost it? Where do they stand in the estimation of honest and honorable people? The governor of New Mexico freed Magee, saying: "This whole thing is a disgrace to New Mexico."

He that loseth his life for the Kingdom of Christ shall save it. The pity of it is that so few men recog-

nize the truth of the Carpenter's words. Compromise kills honor. A stradler is a slacker. Popularity gained at the cost of integrity has only a toadstool existence. The Carpenter said: "Follow me." It meant Gethsemane for some of them, after their Master had gone to His Cross. But He knew. He always knows. The call for service is genuine today. It is a shame for a man to die worth a million unless he has saved it for the purpose of some great cause. A man who does not "lose his life" in the sense Jesus meant, by the outflow of mind and heart and wealth in the interests of others, is sure to lose his own soul. As a pool stagnates with no outlet so does a human heart. Keep it, and lose not only it but yourself. Nominal church membership is both detraction and subtraction. Padded church rolls mean a powerless church. Waters of the flowing fountain keep sweet.

What shall our prayer be, for palliation or for power? Which shall we choose, the removal of trouble or power to endure it? Both. The Carpenter saw His Cross. But He said: "What shall I say? Father, save me from this hour?" No, that He would not say. It was for that very hour He had come into the world. Redemption hinged on that hour. No. This was the prayer: "Father, glorify thy name." Here was His victory. Already it was accomplished, when the decision irrevocable had coupled with it a vision of the Divine Glory. Then a supernatural word came: "I have both glorified it, and will glorify it again." Then it was that: "Some said that it thundered, others said an angel hath spoken unto him," but the Carpenter said

“This Voice.” Here is the crux of the whole matter: Natural or Supernatural? The Bible, natural or supernatural? The Carpenter Himself, natural or supernatural? Can everything which we call revelation be explained on a natural basis or not? Was the Cross merely a natural phenomenon? Was it thunder, an angel or the Voice of God, proclaiming emancipation? Comrades of the Carpenter are in danger of crying: “Lord, take away this task,” rather than: “Lord, make me equal to this task.” “He is not worthy of the honeycomb who shuns the hives because the bees have stings.” The recluse says: “Let me get away from this world, with its wickedness and misery.” Comrades of the Carpenter must say: “Let me mingle with the poor, the needy, the down-trodden, and help them up.” This by no means demands that we lie supinely on our backs while the wheels of avarice, hatred and villification roll over us, unprotested and unmolested. Nothing of the sort is demanded. We need not seek heavy burdens for their own sake. There is no virtue in penance, but much in penitence.

What a prophet was Peter Forsyth of Hackney College! He said: “The great battlefield of the world in the immediate future is that borderland between the natural and the supernatural. There the Church will gather. There she will make her final determinations. Some will retreat and move back into naturalism. Others who recognize His voice, will move out and on into the supernatural.” Here the Church of today actually does stand. Some are retreating and moving back into the natural. Others recognize “This Voice,”

and are standing for a supernatural religion with its Redemptive urge and character-making power. As they read the Bible, some say: "It thundered" (that is, it is only the work of men). Others say: "It is rather above the natural, yet of the same general kind." Others say: "It is the Voice of God. Hear and obey." The difference is as wide apart as the poles. When a soul has been "born from above" some say: "It thundered." That is, nothing has happened except a new resolve. Others know the "Voice" has spoken and a deposit of Divine life has entered and the New Birth is a reality. To the materialist and the Modernist, Regeneration is a myth. To the Supernaturalist it is the realest of all human experiences. To reveal to the world the fact of Comradeship with Christ so close that His life and His love have found expression anew, is the business of the comrades of the Carpenter. The great heroes of the faith all proclaim it. Paul and his associates, the church fathers and martyrs declare it. The Reformers reannounce it. The missionaries of the cross affirm it. A communicable and communicating God in Christ, ever available, always sympathetic and always revealing Himself anew, is here. Our time calls for undeviating loyalty and unswerving devotion to the Carpenter-Christ, God's Son, our Saviour.

Dante said: "Give light, and the people will find the way." Show the world "the Light of the World," and the people will find the way. Tell the truth about the Carpenter and Calvary and the people will find the Way. Not thunder, not an angel but the Voice Divine speaks in Christ: "I give unto them Eternal Life."

XIII

MOUNTAIN CLIMBING WITH THE CARPENTER

THEN SPOKE THE CARPENTER: "Ye believe in God, believe also in me."—JOHN 14:1.

IN ALL of His discourses the Carpenter stressed faith as the one thing indispensable to efficiency and achievement. On the sea, when winds were contrary, He appeared to the distressed comrades, walking on the wave. His reassuring word, when they were frightened, was: "Be of good cheer; it is I." Peter undertook to meet Him, walking upon the water. He failed. Why? The Carpenter answers the question when He says. "O thou of little faith, wherefore didst thou doubt?" Salvation is promised to the believer, the man of faith. An achieving life is represented by Jesus as a life in which faith takes a commanding place. It is not something that can be worked up, but which can be received as a gift. By grace are ye saved through faith, and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God." "All things are possible to him that believeth."

We are face to face with the question as to just how the sense of the presence of the Carpenter is to be experienced, and Comradeship established now. We have little realization of how large a part the faith faculty plays in the successes, the victories and the happiness

of life. In religion we are preëminently in the realm of faith. Comradeship with Christ is possible only through a faith that absolutely unites us to Him. Again and again Jesus upbraided His Comrades because they lacked faith. "How is it that ye have no faith?" After the Transfiguration, when He came down from the mountain and found the disciples wondering because they had lacked power to cast out the evil spirit, He gave as the reason for their failure: "Because of your unbelief."

It is lack of faith that today prevents multitudes of professed Christians from enjoying true fellowship with God. To far too many people, Christian experience is a hazy, unreal thing. The historic Christ, yes; but the Comrade Christ, no. "I cannot make this thing real" is the constant regret expressed. If everything depends on faith, and if the Carpenter stressed it as the explanation of every victory of life, why not make a study of what it is and how to obtain it! If we are to enjoy mountain climbing with the Carpenter, faith must visualize Him, and faith must link us to Him, and faith must indeed effect a real fusion whereby our lives are one with His. The exhilarant life is the life in which we know ourselves linked up with the Life Divine. It is on the Mount with God we have the deepest sense of joy and inspiration.

We stood one morning, before a single ray of the sun could be seen, on the top of Pike's Peak. In the chill of the morning we waited. Not one object could be discerned beyond the immediate artificially lighted surroundings. But we had faith in the coming of the

sun. So we waited until the wonders of valley and mountain should be unveiled. Our faith was rewarded. Streamers of light began to rise above the eastern horizon. The light increased until the eastern sky was all aglow with a silver sea. Then in quick succession panoramas of splendor appeared. The "sea of glass mingled with fire" stood before us. Away down in the valley the morning mists had caught the fires of the heavens. One great billowy sea of molten gold spread before us. Nature was transfigured. Time passed, and in our vision we passed from the transfiguration to the unfolded beauties of the broad valley. From our vantage ground, with wide horizon we could see vast stretches of mountain and plain. Yonder was the Garden of the Gods, with its weird figures. Here and there villages dotted the plain, and in the spaces between were orchards and vineyards, rivers and glistening pools. Everything at last stood out clearly defined. It seemed as though the universe were ours. What an unspeakable charm there is in wide horizons! We became aware that the great thing about life is altitude. It is altitude that gives amplitude. It is to such heights the Carpenter was wont to lead His Comrades. He does it still, but only where faith in Him secures a real following. It is the glory of God to unveil Himself. The effect of Comradeship is altitude and amplitude of life, mental and moral. Littleness can have no place on mountain peaks. The sublimities of life are wide open to any one who walks the heights with the Lord of Glory today. The dim and distant become distinct and near. The far-away is reachable. When

the Comrades of Christ stood in the midst of the angry storm and their boat was sinking they were not as alone as they thought themselves to be. Faith would have, then and there, made the Master available to them. They learned through that experience that the Carpenter is solicitous though invisible, reachable though seemingly distant, unpreventable though wind and wave seem to prevent His approach, communicable when discovered, and more than equal to every emergency of life in which His comrades may find themselves. All this, through faith. In the Hero chapter of Hebrews the one basis for every great achievement of Hebrew leaders was faith. When Jesus was about to leave His comrades as a visible presence, He well knew how easy it would be for them to lose sight of Him spiritually. It was just this He desired to prevent. He begins His wonderful discourse on peace and power with the words: "Let not your heart be troubled." How could it be avoided, when every sort of distress and trial was to be experienced? "Believe in God, believe also in me." "He that hath seen me hath seen the Father." "To believe in God is to believe in me. We are one."

If we are ever to stand on sacred summits of commanding sweep of truth and know things as they are, it will be under the leadership of a regnant present-day Christ. The Christ for today is the Christ who calls men into intimate fellowship with Himself and saves them. The Christ for today is the Christ of deep and soul-filling experience, through Comradeship. We must hear His voice, see His face and know that we

have grasped His hand and that He, and not our own unaided wisdom or lack of wisdom, is guiding us mountainward. Talk of thrills! There are none like those given in this world by comradeship, human and Divine. The sweetest of all emotions is the emotion of Comradeship with the Carpenter. That strange mysterious inbreathing of the Great Comrade into our very souls is what we may well pray for and secure. But it is all a matter of faith. You may argue about it until doomsday and never experience it. You must take it, use it, possess it. It is yours for the asking—in faith.

Well, then, what is faith? It is something that makes available vast wealth beyond the tangible and visible. It is something that makes Divine resource a possession as positive as any material thing which we call ours. It is the secret of prevailing prayer. There is a vast and discouraging distance between the goal we are seeking and the distance we have covered. The pursued and the attained are wide apart. The soul is overawed by a sense of the potential mood. The possible is so wonderful yet so strangely far beyond us. Then the imperative mood sobers us. We must, therefore we can. But how? The ideal beckons us. Contrary winds and boisterous waves appall us. We are in danger of sinking. Only faith can save us. In spite of all dangers and handicaps the mountain-peak keeps calling us. The ideal beckons to us. Unaided finiteness denies that our ideals are other than impossible Utopias and points with fine scorn to our limited resource.

Our conscious inability baffles us but cannot kill purpose. How can a measureless need be met with a measurable resource? Of course, that is out of the question. What then? Faith. It comes to our rescue. Life's manageable ideals demand it. There is an intuitive belief that somehow, somewhere, there is available a resource equal to the ideal. Consistency necessitates it. The soul's aspiration declares it. Justice asserts it. Who will believe that our highest and holiest conceptions are but tantalizing Utopias or iridescent dreams? Then indeed were we condemned to endless peacelessness. No; it is not true. Faith answers the soul's unremitting cry for enough of Al-mightiness to enable us to move on toward celestial summits, where all the beatific glories of transfiguration will become a normal experience of life. One thing is sure, the world of sense does not satisfy our highest aspirations. Even the thought-world leaves an aching void. The things with which we deal in the material world do not conduct us to the "tree of life" without whose fruit the soul is doomed to hunger on forever. Only the Author of Life can contribute the essentials to growth toward perfection. We are doomed to a life of baffled endeavor unless somehow we can so connect with the Author of Life as to have at command all the resources of His own great heart and mind.

Christianity declares for a communicating, contributing, empowering Deity. Vital connection with Him is the supreme concern of life. If we fail here, life is a wretched failure everywhere. Either comradeship or condemnation stands before us. Faith

apprehends and appropriates the Divine. Faith establishes a connection between the measurable and the Infinite. Its discoveries are real. Its testimony is true. Its appropriations are our wealth. Our mightiest incentive to personal effort is the fact that every energy of our own is supplemented by the measureless energy of God. Not what we are, but what we are to become, spurs us on. A sense of ability produces lasting satisfactions and a sense of contentment. Power as a possibility is inspirational. This faith cannot be "worked up." You cannot say, "Go to, now, let us have faith, and move mountains." The faith does not come, and the mountains do not move. It is a question of how we will use the power when once it is given. It is literally true, as the Carpenter told His Comrades, that if we have faith as a grain of mustard seed we can remove mountains. The fact is there is not permitted a faith to be used for self-aggrandizement or personal glory. Faith is a gift of God. It is given, when asked for with a purpose to serve and to glorify God. Here is the crux of the whole matter of faith. We refer, of course, to Christian faith. God gives it just as far as its exercise will glorify God and bless humanity. Not a particle more of Christian faith can be yours than you will use to connect up with God for holy purposes. Faith is a continuous incitement to the heroic. It leads to self-effacement and self-investment. How poor would life be if its sole treasure consisted only of the defined and demonstrated in the material realms!

The reality of the larger wealth is not mechanically demonstrable, but the fact that it is available is attested

by the experience of every Comrade of the Carpenter. The soul poverty that inevitably results from ruling out Christian faith and its products is seen in the lives of such men of ability and even genius as Schopenhauer. He reveals the poverty of unaided finiteness at its best. He developed a philosophy that denied the validity of faith. His destructive mood and false system developed hopeless pessimism. There was nothing to relieve the oppressive darkness in which he found himself at the end. Swift drifted into doubt, and lived in a rayless, hopeless night with little incentive to effort, none to sacrifice, and with nothing to gladden his heart. Even Matthew Arnold cannot seem to relieve the somber sadness which rests like a shadow on his heart, because he has ceased to find any reality in Comradeship with the Great Companion. His verse is like the sighing of the winter's wind among leafless trees. The consequences of doubt, and the denial of faith, has rarely been pictured with greater vividness than in James Thompson's *City of Dreadful Night*.

The nineteenth century began under a dark cloud of atheism. It was intolerable. In that heavy poison-weighted atmosphere, the best in man could not live. It outraged the clear intuitions of the soul. The agnostic mood took possession of many gifted minds. It was a denial, as an active force, of all that lies beyond the realm of the intellectually manageable, without the aid of the Infinite. It utterly failed. Humanity rejects all pessimistic philosophies. Accompanying agnosticism was a crass materialism. Nature was severely arraigned for her unethical operations. The leaders of

scientific thought found no true basis for ethics. John Stuart Mill was the exponent of naturalism; what did it offer? Nothing that satisfied. But faith survived all these deliverances and assertions of doubt. After thirty years of supremacy, the scientific mood gave place to the idealistic mood, and men began to breathe more freely. Through all the changing moods of thought, faith in the Great Comrade, has held her ground. After the confusion of tongues and the noise of battle faith has stood out in its glorious apparel more resplendent than before the war against it. Tennyson is at his best when sounding the note of faith and, in wonderful poetic imagery, telling forth its beauty and power of achievement. Browning, the most inspirational of the poets of his day, was inspirational just because of his unswerving faith. The key to his optimism is found in a single sentence in *Pippa Passes*: "God's in His Heavens, All's right with the world." His unfailing faith in a Superintending Providence was a perpetual incentive to noble endeavor to lift the world. These men who enjoyed Comradeship with the Carpenter day by day made a contribution to the world through their poetic works that will live long after the deliverances of skeptics and the apostles of Naturalism are forgotten. John Oxenham is a modern illustration of a poet inspired and faith awakening.

Faith is not credulity. It has a true rationale. It is always reasonable, if it is a true faith. Every frontier terminal has this inspiring legend: "Plus ultra." An eminent canon of the English Church said: "From the platform of the done, we look out upon the undone."

Let us say from the platform of the demonstrated, we look out upon the undemonstrated, and claim it as our possession.

The highest rung in the ladder of scientific knowledge comes short of what we feel we must attain. It is from this highest rung, faith bids us take our flight to measureless spiritual wisdom and power. Christian philosophers have all acknowledged a legitimate sphere for the exercise of faith. We would not wish to advocate a faith that ignores the criteria of truth, nor would we dare try to exercise such a faith. The faith the Carpenter enjoined is of the very essence of reason. Faith reveals the naturalness of the supernatural and the reasonableness of the superlogical. The more securely faith is entrenched in reason, the greater will be the inspirations and achievements resulting. What the reason requires, in order to soul completeness, that faith supplies. Let there be a full recognition of the intellectual integrity of a faith that so relates man to God that the entire realm of the spirit becomes as real as the experiences of the natural world. The validity of its testimony cannot be gainsaid. It has led the multitudes who have exercised it, into saving and sanctifying relations with the Invisible God.

The content of faith is simply this, belief in, and an affectional devotement to Almighty God. That is Christian faith. It carries with it the thought of personal commitment. Right here is its peculiar application to the thought of Comradeship with the Carpenter. Belief alone is not Christian faith at all. Until there is an affectional element, together with personal devo-

tion to its object, it is not Christian faith. Faith is an effectuating force in the degree in which its content is infinite. Faith can draw from no higher source than its object. Its contributions are circumscribed by its content. This opens up the whole question: "Can and will God communicate Himself to man as a Friend and a Comrade?"

Revelation is corroborated by experience. Both say God does connect with the human heart when conditions are right. While man is "out of tune with the Infinite" there can be no coöperation: "The achieving Holiness of God Almighty made a true basis for a restoration of harmony between man and God." The death of the Carpenter-Christ was a victory. It established an irrefragable bond between the human and the Divine.

The Love of God is the achieving holiness of God. This leads us to the full content of an achieving faith. It is nothing less than almighty, holy, atoning, redeeming God. It is thus the Cross becomes the world's center. Faith advances and holds guarantees of victory in all obligations, because it appropriates the redeeming and life-imparting power of God. By the victory and disclosures of Calvary, all vital truth becomes discoverable and appropriable, through faith. The entire record of human achievement in history is nothing more nor less than the record of faith's unceasing contribution.

Through the coming of Christ all valuations changed. His concepts were revolutionary in His day. By precept and life, He wonderfully changed the ideals of life.

He gave larger and more intelligent answers to all the great spiritual questions of life. He rested everything on heart purpose. He set before the world new conceptions of success. The laurel wreath He held was for brows unused to worldly honor. His approbation was for the nethermost and hindermost, who yet were the most advanced through faith. He taught the world the graciousness of sympathy, the sublimity of humility, the dignity of self-effacement and the high honor which must always result from unflinching devotion to truth and duty.

He taught a new kind of brotherhood, one which knows neither caste nor color. He denounced false ideas of independence that ignore the rights of others. He gave a new conception of law, as something not arbitrary or existing for the sake of the law-giver, but something existing in the very constitution of things, whose sanctions are wholly independent of Divine decree. The splendid truth of the unity of the race was declared by the Carpenter, long before it was announced as a scientific discovery. Is it strange, then, that faith in Jesus Christ has played so large a part in world progress? What has it not done for womanhood, childhood, manhood, citizenship, for music, art and learning! Everywhere you find the footprints of the Carpenter as you pass up the slopes of progressive achievement.

It is one thing to have a vision of some desirable achievement for the human race and quite another to have the courage to undertake its realization. Here again faith is the faculty that seems to give to man

power of initiative. What great movement for two thousand years is not credited to faith as the initiating cause? Not one. Human ability shows at its best when undertaking the impossible. What gives such endeavor rationality? Faith. Not only initiative, but persistency, requires a power above the normal and unaided power of man. Men easily weary in well doing. Persistency in the pursuit of high ideals necessitates constant spiritual renewal.

Unless reënforced, initiative endeavor is quickly exhausted. Most men leave unfinished buildings. Faith comes to the aid of the man of high aspiration and unites him to measureless power. Precisely this results from that Christian experience which we call Comradeship with the Carpenter. Contact with Him reënforces, encourages for every great undertaking in life. It has been clearly proven that no obstructive philosophies of life can ever form a permanent barrier to faith's advance. The apostles of negation sing their dirges, while faith sings her pæan of victory. She is ever working toward personal liberty and individual worth. She multiplies her philanthropies, asserts her humanism, and at the same time leads to spiritual heights where companionship with God is her constant joy. When the world becomes science-drunk, faith saves it. When materialistic considerations absorb the thought of man, and interest in art and music and beauty seemingly dies, faith resurrects all, and men get new glimpses of God. When science becomes sordid, a new philosophy captures science, and then faith calls both into service. The surface waves may conceal the

flow of the Gulf Stream, but it is there. What a world would this be if faith directed the thought of genius! Then Byron would not have lamented:

*“My days are in the yellow leaf—
The flowers, the fruits of life, are gone.
The worm, the canker and the grief are mine alone.”*

Shelley would not have extinguished his light prematurely, and Voltaire would not have passed out in darkness. The star of Hume would not have been covered with a cloud.

Christ founded a Kingdom. Spiritual imperialism is the ideal for the Church. How can it be realized? There is but one answer: Comradeship with the Carpenter. A triumphant faith that God is here, in the spirit of Christ, to redeem and bless.

The reign of Divine Love will be realized when fellowship with the Living Christ gives a Christly rhythm to the heart-beat of humanity. Then will be realized the dream of Goethe:

*“Hoary headed selfishness has felt its death blow,
And is tottering to the grave.
A brighter morn awaits the human sky,
When every transfer of earth’s natural gifts
Shall prove a commerce of good words and works.
The thirst for fame, the fear of poverty, disease
and woe,
War with its million horrors and fierce hell,
Shall live but in the memory of time;
While man, with changeless nature coalescing,
Shall undertake regeneration’s work.”*

XIV

A COURT SCENE WITH THE CARPENTER-JUDGE

THEN SPAKE THE CARPENTER: "Neither do I condemn thee. Go thy way and sin no more."—JOHN 8:11.

THIS was the most daring word ever spoken by the Carpenter. He laid Himself open to the criticism of friends and foes alike. His enemies would make it an occasion for an unworthy standard of morality. His friends would accuse Him of encouraging evil. The storm was growing daily. Accusation, animosity, was developing into conspiracy. The occasion furnished the opportunity for the Carpenter to play the rôle of Judge. The feast of tabernacles was at its height. Following His counsel, the disciples had come to the feast without Him. They found on every hand Jesus was the one person talked about. Members of the Sanhedrin were venomous in their denunciation of Him. He was an innovator, a disturber of the peace, a destroyer of tradition, a self-appointed judge of the most important religious organization on earth, a pretender, a blasphemer, and so on through all the list of crimes which their malice charged against Him. If He comes to the feast, He will be arraigned and tried before the high court. Will He come to the feast? His Comrades hope not. They are appalled at the feeling of hatred

entertained about One who they know was guilty of only one thing; namely, healing and helping His fellow-men. Yet they seem not to have uttered any public word in His defense. It is remarkable that, so far as we know, Jesus was compelled to face every danger and every charge against Him alone. No voice was openly lifted in His behalf all through His life until His trial, when Joseph and Nicodemus made bold to protest against the treatment He was receiving. How lonely He must have often felt when the storm of hate was swirling about Him!

While the agitation is at its height, His Comrades linger anxiously in the temple courts. The cruelty, the injustice of all the accusations and harsh judgments against their noble Master awakens indignation, yet they dare utter no word against the rulers. They only hope prudence will keep the Carpenter in Galilee.

Then came the Carpenter. All unexpectedly, right in the face of threat and violent utterances, the Carpenter walked into the temple, and immediately assumed the rôle of Teacher of teachers. He knew He was, by right of commission, the true Ruler of the Temple.

The agitation became more violent. His words were so marvelous that His enemies were appalled. Officials sent to arrest Him stood in amazement as He spoke. Such teaching! How exalted, how divine! He made His masterly defense of His act of healing on the Sabbath. He was His own advocate. The last day of the feast came. Filled with a consciousness of His Messianic mission and His Divine power and authority, a holy passion stirring in His soul, facing those who

hated Him, He flung out the challenge: "If any man thirst, let him come unto me, and drink." What a claim! The world's satisfaction in Himself! Wisdom, peace, power, blessing, freedom from sin—everything desirable He declared to be in Himself. Where was the answer? The very boldness of His declaration silenced caviling for the moment, and the officers sent to arrest Him stood with bated breath and changed their purpose. In the face of such a claim, a claim not one could answer, they must decline to arrest Him. They return to the Sanhedrin, and offer as the reason for their failure to carry out the mandate of the ecclesiastical authorities: "Never man spake like this man." Another way of saying: "While He is a man, yet He is much more. This is no merely human being who is in the temple making for Himself such stupendous claims. We dare not arrest Him."

With a sneer of contempt, they were accused of having been deceived by the arch-deceiver. Hear now the angry debate: "He is a good man and is interested in the people." "He is a deceiver, and you have had no education to warrant an expression of judgment about Him." "What do you who have no theological training know about it?" "All scholars will tell you He is either self-deceived or a deliberate deceiver." "But He is a worker of miracles, and is that not an evidence that the Carpenter is much more than an ordinary man?" "Supposing the Messiah were to come, would He accredit Himself any more fully than this man has done?" "Be silent! You also are led away by His deceptions—can any Prophet come out of Gali-

lee? Read your sacred books, and you will be wiser. Do you know of any intellectuals who accept Him as Divine? What can the multitude know about sacred truth? It is for scholarship to determine who and what the Nazarene is." "Doth our law," said Nicodemus, "permit a man to be condemned unheard?" "Members of the Sanhedrin, it is time for us to take drastic action. Do you hear what Nicodemus saith? He, too, is being led astray. This thing can continue no longer."

Evening came. The contention could not longer continue in the temple courts. Then, it is recorded: "And they went every man to his own house; but Jesus went to the Mount of Olives." The feast of tabernacles had ended. The lights were extinguished. The multitude went each to his own place of rest. He who owned the world had no home—He went out into the great open spaces, to be with the Father.

The great temple of nature was His place of peace. There is a beautiful spiritual song: "I walk alone with God." Wonderfully it unfolds the truth of spiritual comradeship. Bethany was just over the brow of the hill. There were His special friends. But in this important hour Jesus sought the closest fellowship with the Eternal Father. He well knew what was awaiting Him. The blazing anger of His foes would become a greater conflagration.

Reactional recreations—important thought! The multitude sought repose; Jesus sought reënforcement. Human character wonderfully discloses itself. You can tell a man's character by the way in which he spends his leisure moments. Vacations are more indicative of

qualities of character than the ordinary line of activity. What do men seek when the stress of obligation is removed? When the day's work is over, where will the evening be spent? You may associate with a business man day after day through the year and know less about him than you will know in twenty-four hours on an ocean liner. How will he spend his leisure time? Some will spend their time communing with the God of nature, as seen in the vast ocean with its mighty waves and great heaving pulses, or as seen in the flaming glory of a sunset at sea. Others will be occupied with books. Others will be drinking and gambling. The recreational reactions of men—a wonderful study! Jesus again and again sought for relief from the stress of self-giving. His moments of leisure were never moments of license. They were not even hours spent in self-satisfactions or indulgences. He spent His leisure moments in the mountains with God. It is necessary that the strain of toil have relief. A vacationless life is an overstrained life. The period of leisure will tell you what you are.

Three men of professional prominence were on the cruise to Egypt and the holy land some years since. We knew them well. They had received a "special indulgence." Within two years one was dead; in three years another, and the remaining one lived on in wretchedness. Sinful self-indulgence was the cause. Their recreational reactions were wrong. Cairo was their undoing. Ask yourself in the hour of leisure the nature of your impulses. Ascertain whether the impulse is for gratification or growth. If gratification,

then the result will be a time of arrested development. Times of rest should be times of growth. Vacation should mean recreation. Jesus went to the Mount of Olives. God—goodness—power—preparation!

Morning came. Night had not changed the temper of His enemies. He was ready; He had seen the Father. Again the people thronged about Him. It was hardly safe, yet they felt the irresistible drawing of His wondrous personality. What was it in the Carpenter that pulled people to Him? It was that inner Redemptive Love, always active in His soul. The threats of Pharisees and Sadducees could not hold back the people anxious for more light and more love and more life. Times do not change the drawing power of the Carpenter. He is still the mightiest magnet on earth. Hold Him up before the people in His true nature, and they come in thousands to learn more about Him. Nothing will constantly hold an audience, through the years, but the one commanding Personality, Jesus Christ. His comrades catch His spirit and feel the thrill of His love, and they, too, become magnets, to draw people to them.

It is amusing to hear unsuccessful men discuss why some men have large congregations. They will analyze situations and personal qualities, all the time seeking above all else to explain away any superior power in the individual himself. The reason is within easy reach. The Carpenter-Christ is presented in the wealth of His Redeeming love and His measureless power, and then the people find their greatest needs supplied and their deepest questions answered. Why are so

many scholastics shunned? Why are men, accounted eminent, given a wide berth by the mass of the people? Coldness! Lack of sympathy. No heart. Not so with true Comrades of the Carpenter. A burning desire to bless increases with the passing years when you walk with the Carpenter-Christ today.

When morning came Jesus again entered the Temple, and taught. The unhurried Christ! "He sat down and taught them." There is much in attitude. His attitude was that of dignity arising from a sense of power and wisdom. He knew the truth. He knew He was pouring out beatitude. He had only two and a half years to do the work of millenniums, yet He never hurried. The clamoring voices of accusation did not startle Him or change His speech. He was no trimmer. He saw the urgency of human need, yet He never hurried. He taught the world that haste is waste, but the fevered world has never learned the lesson. We rush to and fro as though everything hinged on what could be done in the next ten minutes of time. He sat down like a king, and taught them. We rush to public platforms and seek to attract, entertain, captivate. He did all without effort. He did it by offering something worth while. What a curriculum! Not one line of study calculated to benefit, enlarge, empower, omitted. Not one. Not one of the graces neglected. No wisdom not touched upon. Is there ambition? He taught how to turn it into aspiration. Is there sorrow? He taught how to transform it into joy. With a clarity of utterance such as no teacher in all the world could use, He presented proposition after proposition, revelation after

revelation, all calculated to ennable life. His vision was clear and His mind balanced. So He taught. He does today. It is the highest form of entertainment. He taught truth relating to both worlds. With a familiarity born of experience He discoursed on things Divine. No man is ever wise until he has sat at the feet of the Carpenter.

But He is interrupted. Something is ever interrupting the Great Teacher today. There is a noisy demonstration in the outer room. He turns, to discover a woman being dragged before Him. Her hair is disheveled. Her face bears the expression of distress. She is making no protest. She is the picture of despair and hopelessness. Her accusers make known the fact of her sin. The evidence is narrated with zest. Judgment is demanded. The Carpenter a Judge! It was as though a court had been constituted, and He appointed to preside as judge. He accepted the appointment. He heard the accusation. The law was explicit: According to the Jewish law, she must be stoned to death. A throng had followed the poor creature and stood waiting the action of the Carpenter. He is cornered. If He pronounces sentence of death, then where is His compassion, and by what means may He insure that it will be carried out? If He declines to pass sentence, He is a coward, and lacking in the noble qualities claimed for Him. If He pronounces sentence in her favor, then He is a menace to public morals, for He is encouraging crime. Will He deal with the transgressor justly? Yes, but if only justly, then there is no hope. Will He deal mercifully? Then advantage will be

taken of His merciful attitude, to denounce Him. Remember, He had come from the Mount of Olives, where He had been in prayer. Happy the people who have judges who pray. Trust a judge who comes into the court room from the Mount of Olives. What does he see in her accusers? A wolf pack. What wonder that He had said to His comrades: "Behold, I send you forth as sheep among wolves." Ferocity and rapacity and pitilessness cannot be better symbolized than in a hungry wolf.

A Russian painter has represented the viciousness and mercilessness and terribleness of a wolf pack bearing down upon the victim. A mounted Cossack on furlough is nearing his cabin after a ride through a lonely wood. He has heard that most terrible of all cries, the cry of the wolf pack, and has ridden wildly, plying whip and spur to his horse, and will soon reach home and safety. It is a life-and-death matter. He has fired his last shot, and some of the maddened beasts have waited to tear and devour the wounded one, while others are straining every muscle to reach their prey. Their tongues are protruding from their mouths, dripping with saliva. Beastliness and brutality is at its very worst. Your heart beats in sympathy with the imperilled Cossack, and you wonder whether or not he will be saved.

That is a true picture of thousands upon thousands of victimized people in this world. Jesus saw the wolf pack, in the accusers of the woman. Did they have any zeal for righteousness? They cared only to carry out their malicious designs. Where was the accomplice,

the partner in sin, of this woman? Why had he not been brought before Him for judgment. The double standard! The woman always cursed, the man permitted to go free. That is intolerable to true Comrades of the Carpenter. Social justice has never been done to women. Man, because powerful, has been cruel.

The Carpenter-Judge looked first upon the woman. He could not condone her guilt. He must sentence her. But He saw criminals a hundred times worse than she was, in her accusers. Only motive counts with God: "Let him that is without sin cast the first stone at her." It was a blow between the eyes. They fell back stunned. One greater than Daniel has come to judgment. They were exploiting their victim for their own purposes. They were intent on incriminating Him whom they had all unwittingly appointed Judge. Yes, He pronounced her guilty. He sentenced her. But the execution of the sentence must be in innocent hands. Punitive judgment belongs to God alone. These accusers thought only of punishment for their victim and vengeance on the Judge. Restorational judgment should occupy the attention of our courts. The "Hole of Calcutta" was representative of the prisons of the world before John Howard Paine and Florence Nightingale undertook their humanitarian work of prison reform. It was the beginning of a new and better day. Salvation and not annihilation is the Christian ideal in dealing with criminals. The pardon and parole system may be abused, but conditions have vastly improved, and thousands of men who had gone wrong have been reclaimed.

The Carpenter wrote upon the ground. It is the only record we have of the writing of Jesus. What did He write? Inasmuch as it was required of a Judge to write out his sentence, why may the writing of the Carpenter not have been the sentence He was about to impose on this woman? "Neither do I condemn thee; go thy way, and sin no more." He sentenced her to life and not to death. Here is mercy Divine. Did or does Christ condone sin? Forever no, but He has mercy on the sinner.

"Judge righteous judgment." That demands a knowledge we do not always possess. Then be generously magnanimous. Here was the sentence to life: "Sin no more." Guilt? Yes, but another chance. It was a sentence forbidding further sinning. That meant life. No man ever yet won His way into Divine favor by the high perfection of His own conduct. On his knees in penitence is the road to Comradeship with the Carpenter. The accusers of the woman taken in sin were still very ceremonious. They went out in the order of their age, "from the eldest to the youngest." Ceremony, but no justice and no Christ. There is no salvation there.

There is a "day of judgment." God is kindly merciful. Comrades of the Carpenter have nothing to fear in the great assize. Be not deceived. "He that believeth on me hath everlasting life and shall not come into condemnation." The Great Comrade offers His constant companionship as the supreme assurance of "life everlasting." Evil is intensely aggressive. It stops at no boundaries. It recognizes no commands.

It respects no sanctities. It violates with impunity every right of humanity. It is perpetually crowding out and crowding back virtue and honor. With unlimited audacity, it confronts incarnate holiness. It usurps every available throne. As the savage dog, no matter how long it is chained, will go its fullest length and throw its power against it in an effort to reach its victim, so likewise with evil, when dominating the heart of man. Compromises never satisfy the powers of darkness. Flags of truce are never honored. When a question of right is under consideration, unyielding right is the only safe attitude. The beginnings of all sin are insignificant, but the spirit of compromise is the signal for further encroachment and more tyrannical dictation. One square foot of a dyke opened, and you have endangered the entire area protected from the sea. A tiny aperture in a dam means ultimately its washing away and the devastating flood sweeping to destruction all that lies in the pathway below.

Powerful as it is, evil is more than matched by incarnate righteousness. The predictions of modern unbelief that the Christian Church, and Christianity itself, will pass away only reveal the mental and moral folly of those who present them. The man who goes to a pebbly shore and stands throwing stones at the stars with the expectation of stopping the rhythm of the spheres is wise in comparison with a man who opens his vials of wrath upon the Carpenter and His Comrades, expecting to destroy their power. More effective is the barking coyote on the western prairie, trying to retard the onward sweep of the lightning express, than

are the criticisms, the sneers, the taunts and denunciations of atheism to retard the onward sweep of the chariot of God Almighty. You can more easily destroy the effect of the sunshine upon the earth than you can destroy the influence of the Comrades of the Carpenter charged with His fervor and love. The affirmations of men are easily discounted. The speculations of men may be ignored, but the living, beating heart of a trusting child of God is irresistible.

XV

IN THE SHADOWS WITH THE CARPENTER

THEN SPAKE THE CARPENTER: "I am the resurrection and the life. He that believeth in me, though he were dead, yet shall he live, and he that liveth and believeth in me shall never die."—JOHN 11:25.

STEP softly. There is a shadow on the hearth. The gaunt forbidding spectre, sickness, has cast a spell of gloom. Have you seen Watts' picture hanging in the Tate Gallery, London, bearing the title, "The Man with the Scythe"? A cottage home of humble appearance, with its little garden of flowers, is under the shadow of an impending sorrow. A mother is seated in the yard with her arm protectingly about the emaciated form of her beloved child. She is shielding her from "The Man with the Scythe," who is passing by the gate, hesitating as though uncertain whether or not he will enter. The anguish on the mother's face is the striking feature of the whole painting. Death is the man with the scythe. Sickness is his invitation to enter. The mother well knows that if he turns and comes within the gate with his scythe, she has no power to prevent the reaping. Her darling will be taken from her.

Sickness makes the whole world kin. The man with the scythe is no respecter of persons. Bolts and bars cannot stay him. Passionate love and devotion are

powerless. When sickness enters the home no affectation, no denials, no imaginations can change the fact that the shadow is there. Sickness in a mansion establishes the "zone of quiet." You must drive carefully and noiselessly; some one is sick. No blaze of electric lights, no levity, no assertive indifference to conditions, can take away the shadow cast by serious illness. Everything is changed. Happiness is in eclipse. Hilarity is impossible, if the mind is normal. It is the time when self-sufficiency breaks down. When the sun of health and prosperity brightens the path, independence seems quite possible. Wealth, eminence, prosperity, give a sense of personal power. When the shadow falls it is different. You can walk in the sunlight alone, but in the shadow comradeship is sweet.

The Bethany home was in the shadow. The Carpenter had often enjoyed the hospitality of this home. Here He had found sympathy with His mission. Love interlocked the members of the home with Jesus. He had here found rest and sweet repose when the burden of the world's sin rested heavily on His heart. Lazarus had listened eagerly to His words. The two had become comrades—with the full significance of the words. Now the shadow has fallen, the first thought is of the Carpenter. How can He be reached? If only He were here! What no ordinary physician could do, He had the power and the will to do. He had proven Himself the Great Physician. Happy are those on such intimate terms with the Carpenter today that His presence is the first thought when the shadow falls.

"The sisters therefore sent to him, saying, Lord, he

whom thou lovest is sick." A touching, tender message. He did not need to be reminded of the bonds of love that held Him to Lazarus and to the sorrowing sisters. Jesus was far away. He was holding a special mission at the very place where He had first been credentialed by the Father. "Many believed on Him there." It was time of revival. His cause was making headway. He was gaining disciples. The shadow of sickness and sorrow always commands the sympathy and loving attention of Jesus Christ. He will surely leave His work and hasten to the bedside of the sick friend. There is nothing which challenges faith like the inexplicable delays of Divine Love. We read with amazement: "Now Jesus loved Martha and her sister and Lazarus. When therefore he heard that he was sick, he abode at that time two days in the place where he was." Astounding! Why not hasten at once? It is, then, no evidence of a lack of interest or love if our petitions are not promptly granted. He very particularly loved the members of this Bethany household, yet He delayed two days before starting to them in the hour of their deep sorrow. Is it strange that they expostulated when finally He reached Bethany: "Lord, if thou hadst been here, my brother had not died." He was already dead when the messenger had first reached Jesus, and Jesus knew it. Jesus had told His comrades: "Lazarus is dead." There is something almost other-worldly about the inner-urge of a great sorrow. The first instinctive call of the heart in the hour of overwhelming grief is for consolation through an understanding companionship. One who knows the

meaning of Comradeship with the Carpenter, who has heard His sympathetic voice speaking to the soul, who has felt the quivering of His heart's devotion, feels the inner-urge.

*"To Jesus, to Jesus. The storm is breaking!
The lightnings are shooting across the sky.
Come, Thou Great Companion!"*

But He delayed two days. Was His friendship as deep as they had supposed? Could it be possible that He did not love them as He had seemed to love them? A hundred questions may have arisen, for still He did not come. The last sad rites performed; still He delayed. He had a purpose. He was about to make to the world the greatest declaration ever received on the planet. It must be made sure to all that Lazarus was dead. Hence He waits that He may make a greater and better response to the importuning sisters than would at first have been possible.

When He delays today, it is for the same reason. When prayers are unanswered for the moment, we need not interpret it as Divine indifference. We misinterpret Providences. It is not easy for finite minds to read the Infinite Mind. God knows. He never fails to answer true prayer in His way, which is the best way. He will always do the right thing at the right time, if we trust Him. In our impatience and despair we are ever trying to force God's hand. We cry: "Oh, that Thou would'st rend the Heavens and come down;" You can never hurry God. When the right time came the Carpenter said: "Let us go again into Judea." The

comrades protested: "It is dangerous to go there. Stay where you are safe. The Jews seek to kill Thee. A price is already on your head." But there is no swerving Him. Duty compels. His mission must be fulfilled. A sense of obligation is the most commanding thing in the world to a deep soul. Jesus felt the inner-urge. It outranked all other considerations. Always the redemptive urge was with Him. Jesus was not rash. He had retreated from Judea once. Strategic retreats have again and again won the war. The time had not then come for the great tragedy. Now it was arriving. He will go.

"Our friend Lazarus sleepeth, and we go to awaken him out of sleep." Thus He softens the message which is so hard to give. He calls death a sleep. When Stephen was stoned we read: "He fell on sleep." Sleep is the suspension of consciousness. So is death. After sleep there is an awakening. So, also, after death. Jesus used the word "sleep" to soften the crash and crush of the word "death." But He must not dissemble, even to soften the effect of the message, so afterward He said: "Lazarus is dead." There is no pronouncement in life that cuts to the very depths of the heart like that. "Mother is dead." "Father is dead." "Husband is dead." "Wife is dead." You remember how it bore you to earth. Then He said to His comrades: "I am glad I was not there." He would explain why later. Give God time, and He will interpret His own ways with men.

The Son of God must master the grave even before He entered it. Death had long enough dominated hu-

manity. It must be once and for all mastered. The time had come to convince the world that there is a life that masters death. It must be demonstrated. When the decision became irrevocable and the disciples knew it, there occurred what for all time tells how Comradeship with the Carpenter can develop the martyr spirit. Thomas said: "Let us beloved disciples, let us go with Him, that we may die with Him." They would rather die with Him than to live without Him. Has that spirit among men died? It has not. Thousands of our Armenian brethren sacrificed life with Him rather than to live without Him. The days of martyrdom have not passed. Put to the test, millions today would die for Him rather than to deny Him.

Individuality shows itself in sorrow. Martha heard that the Blessed Comrade was coming, and hastened to meet Him. Mary remained in the house, too overcome in her sorrow to act. We are cruelly critical. Do not be too critical of one who weeps. The cruellest of all cruel ties is to criticize people for the way they take their sorrows. With some, whose natures are sanguine and eager, quiet and meditation seem impossible. Their grief must find demonstration. To others, publicity is impossible. They must have it out with God alone. Let God lead you in your sorrow and, in Heaven's name, let others have their own individual way of meeting their burdens. Martha met the Carpenter hopefully: "Even now whatsoever thou shalt ask of God, God will give it thee." "Thy brother shall rise again." "I know he will rise again in the Resurrection, at the last day."

Now let the wheels of time stop rolling for the moment. The Carpenter-Son of God is about to startle the world with such a message as man has never heard: "I am the resurrection and the life!" The deathless life for those united with the Lord of Glory. That is the supreme word of consolation. It has soothed more sorrows than all other words of the Carpenter of Nazareth, the Christ of God. It has driven the cloud from the sky at the open grave for uncounted millions. It has made the tomb a gateway instead of a terminal. It has lifted the eye from the grave to the glory. It has set the star of hope in a sky that was black. Millions upon millions and still other millions have stood silent at the grave with tears streaming from their eyes, and have been able to look up, because they have heard anew the words coming from the battlements of glory in the voice of the Eternal, Ever-living and ever-sympathizing Christ, the Great Comrade of the sorrowing: "I am the resurrection and the life—he that liveth and believeth in me shall never die." Here is the guarantee of a glad immortality. It is the assurance of vastly more than continued existence after death. It is the promise of the Life Everlasting.

Comrades of the Carpenter are comrades forever. Fellowship with God forever—that is Heaven.

"Jesus wept"! The Saviour of the world in tears! Wonderful spectacle for men and angels! Mary had come, and was in tears. Grief awakens grief in sympathetic natures. Never fear a sympathetic nature. There is safety in tears. We misconceive the meaning of tears. Weeping is a manifestation of strength

rather than of weakness. That stoical and stolid coldness which never sheds tears is not an evidence of strength. Such a nature has little influence. Epoch-making souls that have immortalized themselves in great achievement have been kindly and have wept. Tears are a revelation of the inner nature. Sorrow and joy find expression in tears. They are the outlet for strong emotions. They are a wonderful solvent. They dissolve away mountains of difficulty, just as the summer sunshine dissolves away icebergs that stand in the transatlantic pathway. As water is the king of solvents in the natural world, so tears are the king of solvents in the world of thought and feeling. They dissolve distrust and doubt. The ingathered grains of sand create friction on the journal and retard motion, so in domestic and social life the grains of pride, anger, indifference and unkindness generate heat through friction and stop advance. Tears are a great corrective and solvent of these causes of friction. Tear-drops are prisms. They reveal the seven-hued bow of promise, just as the drops of rain reveal the rainbow. The most attractive qualities of life appear in the man with strong emotions, and who is not ashamed to weep. No one would disparage the desirability of intellectual eminence. No more should we disparage the desirability of emotional eminence—which means emotions under control but not stifled. Tears are passports to the heart. You are rarely denied the confidence of one who weeps. You can find access to the hearts of many through the avenue of tears, that would not otherwise be open to you.

The fact that Jesus wept has made comradeship with Him closer and sweeter than it could ever have been otherwise. If He knows how to sympathize with us, then we can draw closely to Him and give Him our confidence and tell Him our griefs and our hopes. The massiveness of an engine does not lessen the need of a safety-valve, but rather increases it. The greater the soul, the more the need of the safety-valve of tears. "She is now safe," said a physician of one whose overwhelming grief had found no vent for many days and whose mind was in danger. She was safe because she was weeping. When Jesus wept, His tears were variously interpreted. Some of the Jews sarcastically said: "Could not this man who opened the eyes of the blind have prevented the death of this His friend?" What was the implication? That He had not in reality opened the eyes of the blind. Why not see the best and not the worst? Even tears can be misinterpreted. The misinterpretations of other people's conduct fills the world with trial, trouble and sorrow. Prejudice always misinterprets. So also does envy. There is no act of life that cannot be wilfully misinterpreted or ignorantly misunderstood. Interpretations of conduct furnish an index to the one who is interpreting. An inclination to believe and say the worst and not the best, indicates a shriveled soul. Make large gifts to some cause, and some pin-headed cynic will say it was done ostentatiously, for the sake of parade. Dress modestly, and you are a prude. Dress in the fashion, and you are a worldling. Refuse large gifts because you cannot afford them, and you are penurious. So it

goes. Why be disturbed because of human opinions? But be careful not to shrink your own soul by your misinterpretations of other people's conduct. Weep when friends have departed, and you are either weak or parading your sorrow for effect. Refrain from tears, and your coldness and indifference is a mark of cruelty. So through the long line of human conduct. It is enough to know that Jesus, with His great deep nature, suffered with the sorrowing. "He bears our griefs and carries our sorrows." There were some at the grave who understood tears. They said: "Behold, how he loved him!" He who hates Christ will allow no act of a professed Comrade of Christ to go unchallenged. Christ works now through His disciples by working *in* them. A denial of the Christian qualities that really obtain in other lives is to deny Christ Himself.

After the tears of Jesus there was a moment of suspense. Readjustments take time. Now they are at the tomb. For four days the friend and Comrade of the Carpenter had lain in the tomb. Watch Him now. Get the scene clearly. Sisters of Lazarus, friends, neighbors, acquaintances, disciples, all are assembled, and all are silent. Jesus has said: "I am the resurrection and the life." Can He demonstrate it? "Take away the stone." There is objection, which is only the more emphasizing of the impossibility of imposture. "He has been dead four days, and by this time his body is decaying." "Take away the stone." There are obstructions to the work of Christ that must be humanly removed. God does not do for us what we

can do for ourselves. Until we are willing to do our utmost, God does not and cannot do His utmost. The stone represented hindrances to the incoming of grace. Until removed, power Divine remains unemployed. Sin is an obstruction which we must be willing shall be removed, before life will be declared. Insulate yourself, and the dynamo will have no access to you. Sin is a non-conductor. Unrepented of, it makes the application of the powers of God impossible. Sunshine is unavailing until it has access. Jesus stood at the door of the tomb and would never have spoken the word that raised the dead, had they not obeyed His command to remove the obstruction. Then He cried: "Lazarus! Come forth!"

What a moment! All eternity, for earth's myriads, hung on the response to that call. Had the Carpenter failed here, He would have had no Comrades. Not since the everlasting mandate had gone forth at creation: "Let there be light," had there been so important an utterance as this. "Lazarus! Come forth!" Will he come?

He awakens! He stands before them, living! It is done! Death is already conquered! Out of the darkness and chill of the tomb, into the brightness, the gladness and the glory of God's world, the dead came. Out of the stillness, into the music of life, with its inspirations, the dead came.

What, then, of the new birth? Cannot He that called the dead to life call the soul, dead while seeming to live, dead in trespasses and sin, to full effulgent, glorious life? Those who are entombed in pleasure,

can He not bring them to the joys that are highest, through His gracious power. Ah! the life everlasting is no mere dream. It is the one wonderful soul-cheering reality; among all the realities in the world, the greatest. Here is the test of all religions: Can the dead be raised?

Does it give life? Does the Carpenter-Christ raise the dead? Does He give new life to His comrades? Untold thousands who have trusted, and have been transformed from death to life, give witness to the power of Jesus Christ to raise from the tomb those dead in trespasses and sin.

“Loose him, and let him go.” Liberty! The glad experience of twice-born men. Freed from the evil that enswathes and enfolds, the Comrade of the Carpenter pursues his way unhampered and unhindered.

He and He alone turns sorrow to joy, shadows to the brightness of His own Glory. The shadows disappear when we walk with the Great Comrade.

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